

DEISM



Osman Nûri TOPBAŞ

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“Allah is the friend of those who believe. He brings them out of darkness into the light. Those who disbelieve are friends of the devil and idols. They take them out of the light into darkness. They are the companions of the fire, remaining in it timelessly forever.” (Al-Baqarah, 2: 257)

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“And among people, there is he who disputes about Allah without knowledge, guidance or an illuminating book. He arrogantly twists his neck to mislead from Allah’s way. For him, there is disgrace in the world; and on the day of resurrection, We will make him feel the pain of the blazing fire.” (Al-Hajj, 22: 8-9)

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“Do not take the behaviour of the ignorant to heart. Advise them and speak to them with clarity / قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا ” (Al-Nisa, 4: 63)

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The Holy Qur'an constantly calls on man to reflect and think about divine majesty, as well as his own impending end:

أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ “Do you not reason?”

أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ “Do you not think and take a lesson?”

أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ “Do you not see?”

أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ “Do you not contemplate?”

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The Real and its Imitation

A famous painter mirrors certain scenes from the Almighty's universe onto his canvass. Galleries are then unveiled to showcase these paintings and art enthusiasts flock to visit. Some even splurge a fortune to buy a piece of his art and the painter is hailed as a "superb artist!"

This, however, is just an imitation of art. The real art lies in the divine majesty and power of Allah the Almighty who created both the painter and the sceneries that inspired his paintings. The Creator of man and the Blessed Prophet (SAW), is the true artist.

Hence;

Wise souls admire the real paintings from the brush-strokes of divine power and glory, with an awe that grows by the second.

Yet, the ignorant whose eyes are shut to the majestic art, marvel at a painter, who is a mere mortal copycat.

We need to open our hearts and eyes to see:

There is the festive spree of colours that emerge at day-break and nightfall with the violet, lily and the rose that burst out with a display of vibrant colours from the depths of the pitch-black soil.

And then you have the seas, rivers, mountains and valleys.

If man looks at both himself and the cosmos with an eye of love and wonder, he will inescapably be awestruck by the perfection of the Almighty's glory.

Necip Fazıl calls out to unconscious minds:

*And who is the master artist who drew this face?
One cannot but ask when staring in the mirror?*

And with this wisdom;

Sufis are not taken in by the portraits a painter has produced only to earn himself a name, and instead their hearts beat with an awe and exhilaration for the Real Artist and His works. They relish the fine art Divine Power has stamped upon countless wonders throughout nature. They gaze at the inexhaustible variety of vibrant tones dyed upon plants and flowers that all rise forth from the same earth. The trees that bear fruit of unique colour, smell and taste and the fine work that has gone into embroidering spectacular patterns upon the wings of a butterfly even though it has a mere lifespan of two weeks. They look at the greatest marvel that is the human being, and on top of all this, they also lend an ear to the mysterious dialect, silent yet audible, spoken by the entire creation.

For such people, the universe is an open book, ready to be read. The Lord's first command to humankind was:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

“Read in the name of your Lord, who created! (first, read this divine book, and then proceed to read the book of the universe and the divine art cast upon all creatures including yourself)” (Al-Alaq, 96:1)

One of the friends of Allah said:

“The Almighty Allah is not really invisible. He is invisible only due to our limited capacity to see and grasp the strength of His visibility.”

The artist behind the exhibit of divine majesty and power that transpires in all things is Allah the Almighty. This is a truth best understood by wise and mature souls, who have delved deep into the realm of contemplation.

Foreword

Eternal praise and thanks to Allah the Almighty!

And endless blessing upon our Blessed Prophet (SAW)!

There is one enormous gift Allah the Almighty has given humankind.

The mind.

The Almighty has given us minds so that we can separate good from evil. Having a sound mind is the condition for a person being responsible for his actions. He can only be exempt if he is insane. The mentally ill are under no obligation.

But;

Since the time of Adam (AS), despite being of sound mind, humankind has carried the urge to live irresponsibly. This urge is a captivity to the ego that turns both this life and the next into a dungeon. A captivity that rattles on about freedom, when in reality being a slave of the lower desires.

The human mind was not created to justify and rationalise this horrible captivity with some sort of logic. The mind is rather a divine scale to keep human beings from falling into such traps. It is a centre of conscience for man to separate good from evil.

If not;

Man is then is dragged from one ignorance into another. He turns into a fool that shoots himself with his own pistol.

Therefore;

The mind must strike a balance without falling into extremes.

And this is possible;

Only through the measures instated by the Power who has created us in the first place and revealed to us the Qur'an and sent to us the Blessed Prophet (SAW). In other words, it is possible only with Islam.

The mind is a tool. Like a double-edged sword, it can serve both good and evil.

Satan was the first to quarrel with the Creator by using the mind for evil. As a result, he was banished from the divine presence and given the task of deceiving humans. In a fit of jealousy and rage, he protested against the value that Allah the Almighty had given to Adam (AS).

Let us examine this carefully:

The mind could not prevent Satan from such madness. Quite the opposite, it helped him come up with a logic for his error. And by providing an argument that claimed the supremacy of fire over earth, it aided Satan in choosing the path of rebellion. In the end, he strayed from the right path and was forever cursed.

As humans, we also have minds and we also face the same danger.

But to protect us;

Our Lord has given us a measure by which we can keep on the path of good and stay away from error:

The Qur'an and Sunnah; that is to say, Islam.

This is because;

Every thought, idea, direction and movement outside of this holds no benefit. It amounts merely to following the footprints that took the cursed Satan into eternal hellfire. It is to fall off the edge into eternal loss.

Therefore;

Before tumbling down into that path of misery, we must come to terms with the divine reality. Waking up in the claws of an eternal wrath and punishment will otherwise offer no benefit or way out. It will only add to the insufferable pain and anguish.

And this shows that;

Contrary to what people think, getting caught up in ideas outside of Islam based on illogical notions such as "Who cares! This is what I believe and so be it!" will not lead to personal fulfilment, but rather a catastrophe on the day all souls are resurrected.

While that is the case;

Satan and his hordes unfortunately present these ideas as a glamorous option. Who in their right mind would otherwise purchase a punishment they cannot bear? To keep feeding the heedless customers, the centres of

evil do their trade hiding behind fancy shop windows. They doll up even the most deplorable things like a bride to the point of deceiving people into believing there is nothing prettier. And likewise, they adorn the most evil thing so carefully that those who see it suppose there is nothing better.

Today;

Atheism and deism are presented through this method, and they are being injected into humanity in higher doses.

So what are atheism and deism?

They are an error of reason.

It is for man to mortgage his most precious capacity, which is thought, to the ego's ambitions and desire. It is to live like a ship without a rudder on the sea of ignorance, knowing neither the point of departure nor the final destination. Naturally, the foresight of a man of this kind is lost and his perception, simply because the gauge of his heart is broken. He cannot perceive the flows of divine power and glory embroidered throughout the universe. His eyes are blind. He has virtually become a robot remote-controlled by his ego.

It is due to this that man wastes his most precious capital of life chasing the pleasures of passing fashions. His heart is reduced to a rubble in the maze of manmade systems. He lives oblivious to the wisdom underlying life and death. He never thinks about the news of the afterlife. As the phrase goes, he suffers from a total eclipse of reason.

Today, we can list three reasons behind this aberration:

REASON ONE

A departure from religion; and as its bitter consequence, the return of the mind-set of the age of ignorance, which is besieging humanity and taking people of knowledge as prisoners.

When we look at atheism and deism, we see that these false beliefs also existed during the age of ignorance. The people of the time were also uncomfortable with the Qur'an's revelations about life after death, for these infringed on their ambitions and desires. They asked the Prophet (SAW) to change these verses into something they would like. They came to him and said:

“Bring us a Qur’an that has no mention of rebirth after death, or at least remove the parts where it talks about resurrection and the afterlife!” (Zajaj, *Maani’l-Qur’an wa I’rabuhu*, III, 11)

“Bring us a Qur’an that does not command us to quit worshipping the idols Lat and Uzza. If Allah does not reveal to you a Qur’an of such, then formulate one or alter what has come to you of Allah accordingly; replace the verses of punishment with verses of clemency, remove the harams and replace them with halals!” (Wahidi, p. 270; Alusi, XI, 85)

Simply, they refused to live like human beings because their egos found it too difficult. These pathetic people who believed that might was always right, could not find the might to be fair.

About them, the Almighty revealed:

“And when our verses are recited to them as clear evidence, those who do not expect to meet Us, say:

‘Bring us another Qur’an or change it!’

Say:

‘It is not for me to change it on my own accord. I only follow what is revealed to me. If I were to disobey, I would truly fear the punishment of a tremendous day!’” (Yunus, 10: 15)

And this is the exact place deism wants to take people today. They say, ‘God created this universe and then stepped aside!’ Supposedly, the Almighty does not concern Himself with anything. Just as He created animals and let them be, He also created man and apparently let him be, too. Yet, this could not be further from the truth!

Even the creation of animals serves a purpose. Which animal roams the earth aimlessly without reason? None. For example;

The bee makes honey. The chicken lays eggs. The cow produces milk. The horse carries loads. Ants are the most beautiful and perfect examples of symmetric teamwork. And there are countless other examples.

A wide array of birds allows a glimpse into the magnificence of divine art. From the sparrow to the elephant and the fly to the whale, thousands of animal species elicit admiration for divine power. Even venomous animals like the snake and scorpion carry out a divine duty; in that they teach man and remind him of the dread of eternal punishment.

The Qur'an says:

"And He has made everything in the heavens and everything on the earth subservient to you. It is all from Him. There are certainly Signs in that for people who reflect." (Al-Jathiyah, 45: 13)

Another verse gives voice to this truth, as:

"Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you everything in the heavens and earth and has showered His blessings on you both outwardly and inwardly?" Yet there are people who argue about Allah without knowledge or guidance or an illuminating book!" (Luqman, 31: 20)

If animals are created with a purpose which they peacefully strive to fulfil, how can we even assume that the human being, fashioned in the finest of forms, is created to live on earth without purpose?

The Qur'an's answer to this is clear:

"Do you suppose that We created you for amusement and that you would not be returned to Us?" (Al-Muminun, 23: 115)

"The keys of the Unseen are in His possession. No one knows them except Him. He knows everything in the land and in sea. No leaf falls without Him knowing it. There is no seed in the darkness of the earth, and nothing moist nor dry which is not in a Clear Book." (Al-Anam, 6: 59)

In other words, every created being, from the smallest to the largest, is, at once, a warning sign and a masterpiece of divine art...

With this being the case;

What is the inability to proceed from the effect to the Cause, the art to the Artist but lunacy?

By what other name can we call the scorning indifference to countless cosmic phenomena, from the micro universe to the macro that uplift the mind and cognition, other than a bankruptcy of reason?

Do not minds that become robots by departing from divine revelation, effectively put a stamp of cancellation on their human honour and dignity?

Surely a person who assumes that the brilliant and uninterrupted order we observe both in ourselves and in the outside world is a random coincidence, has a heart in ruins due to excess pride and short-sightedness?

A healthy mind points to a thousand ways to contemplate the Almighty in every object. Regardless of whatever aspect of reality we focus on, we are taken through the gates into a magnificent realm of reflection. Let us just look at one out of countless others:

In 1915, the world population was 1,5 billion. Now, it is around 7 billion. Even though the population has more than quadrupled, the earth has not lost its capacity to produce food for all people. With more people born into the world, there are greater the number of divine feasts laid out for them. As for those who suffer from starvation due to the indifference and exploitation of the others, this is only a sad portrait of another reality, namely cruelty and oppression. If people on earth were sensitive to avoid exploiting others, there would be famine. Putting an end to extravagance and luxury alone would even solve this problem. No matter how much the world's population grows, in line with that immaculate feeding program, the earth is endowed with a divine balance to provide enough food for all. Concerns that are blind to this only expose ignorance and lack of knowledge.

This is the same ignorance that 15 centuries ago, when the world's population perhaps was not even a billion, led to erratic cries like "The earth cannot possibly feed so many people, so we must kill off the excess and murder the new-borns!"

The reality is that, no matter how great the world's population may be, since the beginning of time, the eternal and only Power has always fed humankind both materially and spiritually.

What a display of divine power this alone is, for those who can see!

History stands witness to the fact that;

Man reaches knowledge in baby steps. All strands of knowledge, new and old, that have been given to man across all phases of history are really blessings from Allah the Almighty for us to reflection.

How great a bliss it is;

For those who read the lines of wisdom etched upon the book of the universe and fly far into the horizon of contemplation.

REASON TWO

The second reason that drags people into deism is the terrible state of today's Christianity.

We all know that throughout history;

The core of Christianity has been ransacked by Paul and Jehovah's Witnesses.

- The Christian belief was re-organized by mortals during those historical councils.
- Worship was abolished by transforming ritual prayer to mass, circumcision to baptism, and fasting to dieting.
- The church was given the authority to forgive sins through confession in return for money.
- By "rendering to Caesar the things that are Caesar's", the laws of Christianity pertaining to the world were erased. The religion was confined to the temple. How could the head of state take all authority upon himself to decide social rules and legal punishments?
- A bigoted Christianity reacted fanatically to scientific truths. It subjected scholars to coercion at the courts of the inquisition. The plight of Galileo is well known.

As a reaction to the bigotry of Christianity, ideas were raised about a conflict between science and faith.

It provided fertile ground for remarks such as, "If you stand by science, then you must move away from religion!"

However;

As right as this reaction against a corrupted religion may be, it is equally wrong to level this argument at true faith. The fact is that the more man learns about the truth, the further he moves away from superstition and closer he gets to the true religion.

That is to say;

Opposing the true religion instead of the false is like putting aside food rich in vitamins and preferring to starve to death, instead of just simply quitting the consumption of foods that are bad for the health; and this is nothing but suicide. Just as food is the requisite of physical health, the true

religion provides the necessary food to keep the spirit alive. Therefore, instead of removing poisonous and harmful food out of one's diet, saying "I will go ahead and shun the need to eat altogether", is really nothing but choosing a stupid way to die.

Yet, a cunning and deceptive philosophy, which conceals the truth of the matter behind curtains and disseminates the idea that a person dealing with science must necessarily remain aloof from religion and faith, has sadly culled many educated people and turned them away from religion.

But as an intellectual has said:

"If you separate science and religion, then religion will make people backward-minded, while science will drag them to atheism."

Christianity became corrupted for doing exactly this. At first, as the religion turned into something that appealed to the masses, no one took notice of this dangerous corrosion. But, at that point, Allah sent His final Messenger and abolished all past religions, including the corrupted form of Christianity.

Having been given the stamp of cancellation by the Allah the Almighty, today's Christianity is nothing but a hollow badge. A badge that gives no real spirituality and comfort to those who carry it.

Deep down;

They, too, are aware of their dismal condition. But, instead of searching for a way out, they are only worried about appeasing their consciences by taking the last true religion Islam down into their abyss. What is more, they shamelessly recommend us Muslims to follow their pattern. It is like a seriously ill person who blocks his ears to medication and instead advises the doctor to "Take some of my virus and become sick like me! Do not let me suffer all by myself! Let us die together!" It is this flawed logic that underlies the words Pope Francis expressed during an interview:

"Just as we have done to our sacred texts, it would be in the Muslims' best interest to study the Qur'an with a critical eye. The method of historical and critical interpretation will help their progress."

Yet;

What they call progress is the migration of people to atheism and deism as a reaction to the absurdities of their own religion. And they are simply looking to inject this virus into Islam, just to prove that they are right.

But;

Real progress is to spurn the false and turn to the truth; to shun the virus and take the cure.

They need to see that;

The piles of inconsistencies and contradictions in their religion have pushed -again- their own people to atheism and deism.

The first objection came in the 16th century from Martin Luther. In his own mind, he, too, formulated a religion. After Catholicism and Orthodoxy, Christianity was further divided by Protestantism; and moreover, each sect splintered into countless denominations within itself. There emerged many contradictory ideas. Subsequently, the masses all the more deprived from the truth could not find satisfaction in the false and naturally left that false religion behind.

Sadly, certain currents of philosophy have tried to make the true religion foot the bill for the troubles caused by false and corrupted religions, including Christianity. They have strived to discredit the true faith. By so doing, they have provided fertile ground for atheism and deism to flourish ever more comfortably.

Yet, the source of the problem from the very start, was the corrupted Christianity.

Islam has always remained outside this subversion. It is because Islam is under the Almighty's protection and therefore remains on the straight path that way until the final hour.

Therefore;

The object of all criticisms regarding the supposed conflict between religion and science and the faith vacuum that now afflicts contemporary society, is not Islam but religions sullied by human intervention.

REASON THREE

The third reason as to why the ignorant incline towards deism, is materialist philosophy. In other words, it is the progress of the machine...

Divine wisdom ordained that;

The era in which Europe moved away from Christianity, coincided with its progress in positive sciences, industry and related fields. Through-

out history, an excess of material power has typically made human beings boastful and drunk. The most famous examples are the nations of Aad, Thamud, Nimrod and the Pharaoh.

The deniers of religion in those periods were utterly disturbed by the principles of truth and justice the prophets had brought to them. The reason was that while, on the one hand, they wished to indulge their egos by subscribing to the maxim that “My religion is my desire”, they, at the same time, wanted to be exempt from divine retribution, even if they committed all manner of vile acts. They did not want to get to grips with death and resurrection. As for the ultimate divine truth and man’s inescapable outcome, they did not want to think about these even for a second. So, denial was their chosen way of escape, in spite of the fact that not a single disbeliever since the time of Adam (AS) had been able to save himself by escaping. Their only consolation was their inability to truly understand the magnitude of this deception until the moment they died.

As has been the case throughout history, an array of poisonous ideas and ideologies have also emerged in the last century, as both a trap and a mask for this kind of deception. They can all be summed up as;

Materialism...The affirmation of the material and the denial of the spiritual and therefore meaning behind everything.

This approach has assumed many guises, from the political arena to the economic sphere. But, essentially, they all deny everything except for matter that can be measured and empirically observed.

For example;

Its appearance as communism and socialism saw religion as opium for the masses and ostracised it completely. Despite embarking on a mission to bring equality for all, it ended up serving a partisan minority. Hiding behind loud slogans condemning exploitation of the people, it ruthlessly ended up crushing and exploiting its own people, and ended up being nothing but tyranny and totalitarianism.

Capitalism and liberalism, on the other hand, crushed the people with trusts and cartels. Research shows that a mere 50 rich individuals possess as much wealth as half of the world’s population combined. In the words of Necip Fazıl:

A wolf would not be as brutal, if it reigned over lambs.

Capitalism said:

“Property belongs to the individual.”

Effectively, it meant:

“If someone wishes to get rich, regardless of whatever he does to increase his revenue, just ‘Let him be, let him do it’. There is no need to take precautionary measures to protect social justice and compassion!”

And when they were asked, “What about the poor?,” they pronounced the lie that:

“Wealth that comes with freedom will find a way into the hands of all. Everything will become cheaper. Jobs and prosperity will be aplenty...”

Alas;

This is just a masquerade, a fantasy they have contrived to get people to willingly offer their energies and hopes for them to exploit. A fantasy that will never come true.

In fact;

Capitalism and liberalism have invariably skimmed the public to channel wealth into trusts and cartels. The poor became poorer and many others were shackled and turned into the slaves of usury and interest.

Communism, in contrast, said:

“Property belongs to the people!”

Based on the principle of equality, all citizens were to accordingly become public servants, with the state revenue allotted equally to each. Of course, this was just another fantasy invented to convince people to wholeheartedly put up their hopes and energies for exploitation. Another fantasy that never came true.

In fact;

Communism replaced the trusts of capitalism with the party. People worked like slaves, while party members were handed many privileges and made rich. It was consequent upon these injustices that communism collapsed.

At all times, only;

Islam remains distinct from all these ideologies and continues to hold the solution.

That is because in Islam;

“Property belongs neither to the individual nor to the people but to Allah and people are merely temporary trustees...”

Based on this reality;

Islam accepts private ownership. But, at the same time, it entrusts the poor in the care of the rich.

It enables the wealthy to give alms and charity to the poor with a feeling of duty towards their Lord. This kind of religious brotherhood weaved a web of mercy and compassion across the entire society. Thanks to belief in the afterlife, Muslims regularly spent their fleeting wealth on earth on donations and charity institutions. And their morals enabled them to feel a ceaseless compassion towards the poor.

However;

Ideologies anchored in worldly desires and exploitation have not only ruined the masses financially, they have also injected the public with ignorance and unprecedented selfishness.

Humanity has now reached a point where personal interests are almost all people can see. Consciences have all but dried up from a lack of mercy and compassion.

The capitalist principle of “letting people do whatever they like” does not put up any legal sanctions in the way of accumulating wealth. The end justifies the means.

The bloodbath taking place today across Syria, Myanmar and Yemen is a sad consequence of this lawlessness and injustice that deism made possible.

While crushing the poor and the vulnerable, capitalism has infused the so-called elite layer of society with a ruthless egoism. Masses are chained to the television, the internet and the pleasures of the flesh.

There is neither a religious ruling, nor a conscientious sanction! Neither is there any concern for the afterlife! Everyone has been immunised from spirituality so they no longer find it appealing.

The progress of technology has turned into man an ever more egoistic creature. The desire to live in the moment has dissolved from the heart all thoughts of the hereafter.

The invasion of global culture has spread this barbaric outlook to all corners of the world. It has led to a type of human being that only wishes to live by the indulgence of sensory desires without any scruple for morals, justice or religion. Caught up in the vortex of an egoistic life, this type of individual does not want to come under the principles of the true religion, Islam.

Yet, these principles merely teach the art of how to live like a human being; and instruct values such as mercy, justice and modesty. But those who have become slaves to their egos, do not want to hear any of it.

In the end, as a consequence of the three reasons listed, many people have been dragged into atheism and deism.

Those who find atheism too dreadful and unreasonable to accept, resort to a trick, if you like, where they assume they might be able to save themselves by just accepting a creator. And they call this deism. We are told that this is now becoming a trend especially among people that come from religious families.

But there is not difference between the two!

Both are a lunacy of the mind!

If those who fall into deism, do so for thinking;

“I will stay away from religion, commit all sins and live a comfortably selfish life but will not be a disbeliever. My path will not be atheism, so that would prevent me from disbelief and its repercussions”,

Then they must know that;

There is no difference between deism and atheism.

Let them do a little research and read about the deists’ accusations against religions: it is no different than the claims of atheists.

Does a bottle of poison that could kill a person with just a single drop, stop being poison if diluted with a little bit of water?

What difference does it make? One is denial and so is the other!

Just as hypocrisy is worse than disbelief, deism is an even worse form of atheism!

This book has been written to give the sparkling minds of our people a proper insight into this matter and prevent their pure worlds from being muddled;

And it aims to respond to the lunacies of atheism and deism, and lay bare the swamp of denial that underlies both.

We ask Allah the Almighty;

To make this book a guide for our brothers busy conveying Islam and educating others, in tackling the cunning questions and propaganda that appear on the internet and elsewhere, which target the clear and unblemished minds of our youth.

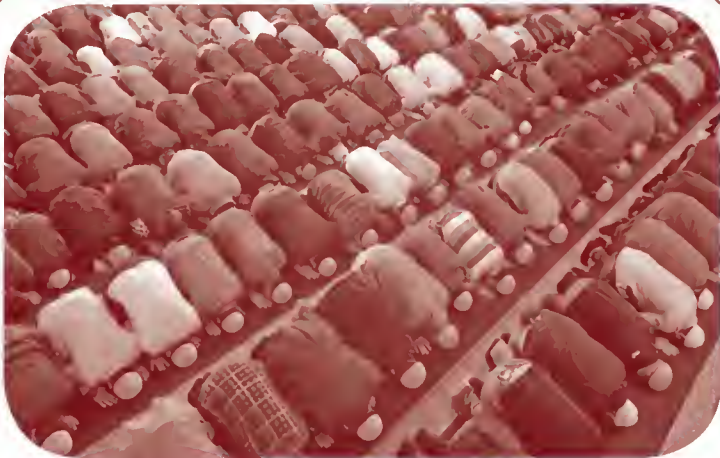
Guidance is always from our Lord alone.

May our Allah, the Highest of the high, and the Owner of owners, never give the slightest opportunity to deniers and disbelievers to wreak havoc upon these lands! May He safeguard our children and students until the day of judgment.

Amin!...¹

Osman Nûri Topbaş
March, 2019 – Rajab 1440
Akmescid

1. I would like to thank M. Ali Eşmeli and M. Kasım Küçükaşçı for their generous help in preparing this book and pray that their efforts become an endless source of rewards for them.



FAITH, THE GREATEST GIFT...



Mehmed Akif says it wonderfully:

*Faith is an essence, but God, how great it is!
A rusty heart without it, is a burden on the ribs!*

Faith is peace and happiness.
Lack of it is to be aimless, restless and base.
It is for the heart to become derelict.

FAITH, THE GREATEST GIFT...

Our Lord's greatest gift to us is to have been honoured with Islam and given the ability to believe.

In Islam belief means to affirm the truth in the heart and declare it on the tongue. Faith is borne from the heart; and from there, it spreads to our language, life, deeds, conduct and morals.

Faith is not an action of the mind. We certainly need true knowledge to believe. But knowing does not necessarily lead to believing.

Satan knew very well the glory and majesty of the Almighty; yet, he became envious of the honour the Almighty showed to Adam (AS) and subsequently, rebelled against the Lord's command and attempted to quarrel with Him. For doing that, Our Lord has labelled Satan "a disbeliever."

Many people throughout history, like the Pharaoh, Abu Jahl and Walid ibn Mughirah who, despite witnessing many miracles with their own eyes and being unable to come up with any objections against their prophets' honesty and integrity, just could not believe due to the envy and enmity emanating from their egos. That is to say, many people have rejected the truth out of pride, despite accepting it deep down in their consciences.

This is because belief is an action of the heart. The Ottoman scholar Cudi Efendi highlights this in a poem:

If You do not guide, Lord, what can knowledge do?

Even if Abu Jahl knew Arabic, what could the Qur'an do?

Islam transcends the mind. It is sent by the Almighty as mankind's highest truth. Using the mind which the Almighty has created and gifted man to weigh and assess the Almighty's commands, is not sufficient.

This is the point where religion requires submission. Besides, faith is to believe in the realm that is unseen. Faith is a trial; and once death arrives and the curtains are lifted to give man a glimpse into the angels and other beings of the eternal realm, it will be over.

What is important is to rid the heart of the whispers of the ego and the devil, and to unreservedly trust and believe in the prophets and revelation, while we are still alive.

Believing in Allah the Almighty as the One who revealed the Holy Qur'an to the Prophet (SAW), and in the news from beyond about the impending future of the afterlife, is possible not only with the mind but with the heart.

With that said, the truths Islam calls on people to believe in are of such a nature that sound minds cannot possibly reject them. In other words, Islam does not defy reason. Much to the contrary, it is a force that trains the reason to become clear. It saves man from being forever stuck in a vicious circle of false reasoning. It is with Islam that minds gain true intelligence.

To this end;

The Qur'an and Sunnah present convincing proofs of the oneness of Allah (JJ), prophethood and the hereafter.

Any unbiased heart that approaches Islam free of doubt and hesitation, will benefit from its evident proofs.

This is because Islam has answered every vital question that man can imagine. It has regulated our lives in the most perfect way.

Islam is the only cure for peace and happiness not just for Muslims but entire humankind.

Akif puts it brilliantly:

Faith is an essence, but God, how great it is!

A rusty heart without it, is a burden in the ribcage!

Faith brings a peace of mind. Lack of faith is to be aimless, restless and base. It is for the heart to become derelict.

Every denial and rebellion involves ignoring questions like;

"Why am I here? Why was the universe created? What is my purpose of life?"; and comes with an idiotic enslavement to a life drawn up by the ego.

Faithlessness is the eternal bankruptcy of squandering the most precious capital of life on fleeting desires. It is a futile getaway on a road that ultimately leads to hell. There is no escape. The only refuge and shelter is Allah the Almighty.

The Holy Qur'an presents us scenes from the history of humankind and our Prophet (SAW) has also cautioned us, by offering us a glimpse into the future, the final hour.

The common denominator between the past, present and future is that:

After acquiring material wealth and comfort, man often turns away from religious and spiritual values to become a slave to his desires; and casts faith aside to deny the Creator, religion and the afterlife.

He tries to console his innate tendency to believe with religions either corrupted or made up by himself with word games such as, "This is the religion of my forefathers", "This is my philosophy of life", "I will believe in what I like" or "This belief gives me comfort", he also comes up with emotional excuses. Yet, the Almighty has labelled each one of them with the same stamp of "denial".

A true faith is one which the Lord accepts and has revealed to the prophets.

For individuals, self-ordained priests, councils and institutions alike to devise certain principles and declare, "This is our religion", is nothing but madness.

This is exactly the scene of today's Christianity, divided into hundreds of sects and denominations.

Allah the Almighty has rejected the doctrine of the trinity as a deviation, and proclaimed that Jesus (AS) is only His servant and prophet.

Judaism has also been corrupted by ambitious and deviant rabbis, who have transformed it into a religion of race; when, in fact, all races belong to the Almighty.

When reason and science first progressed in the West, many scholars distanced themselves from Christianity, as a reaction to its irrationality. Some turned to atheism. Others, however, who believed that the universe had a creator and life came with a purpose, found themselves in a position where they had to reject Christianity, yet retain a belief in God. To come up with a name for this, they referred back to history and found a false belief known to humanity since the time of the Ancient Greeks: deism.

Yet, as distant as corrupted Christianity is from the true faith in the Oneness of God, equally distant is deism in its notion of a god that creates the universe but watches on without interfering.

If they only considered;

Given Christianity was corrupted, would not the Allah send another prophet to clarify the matter?

Many Christians and Jews were able to see this.

On a journey to find the truth that began in Persia, Salman (RA) spent years accompanying priests; he was even sold into slavery before finally reaching the Prophet (SAW).

The moment he laid on eyes on the Prophet (SAW), the former rabbi Abdullah ibn Salam (RA) pronounced:

“Such a face cannot lie!” and rushed to accept the truth.

Whether it is yesterday, today or tomorrow, Islam remains the true religion.

Islam is the only valid religion in the sight of Allah (JJ).

Islam is the religion conveyed by Adam (AS), Noah (AS), Abraham (AS), Moses and Jesus (AS).

Over the past couple of centuries, the Islamic world overall, and specifically Turkey, has undergone major tremors surrounding the place of religion and religious education in social life. Beginning with the Tanzimat period of the 19th century, religious education was orphaned, and, in due course, banned altogether.

A life that shifted from spirituality to the flesh during the Ottoman Empire's Tulip Age, brought defeats on the Western front, which were mistakenly blamed on religion, giving rise to the flawed interpretation that “Religion stands in the way of progress.” As a result, the disease of imitating the West broke out on all fronts, and poisonous western worldviews like atheism, deism and reformism that all had axes to grind against Islam, made their way into our lands.

At that time, Europe had mustered an array of philosophical currents to launch an all-out onslaught on religion.

Materialism rejected the spirit and all forms of spirituality. It accepted no reality other than matter.

Positivism, likewise, denied everything unless it was proven by either experience or experiments.

For them, reason and science had to replace the standing of religion in society.

Darwinism argued a coincidental evolution of the human species from apes and presented the human being as a type of highly evolved monkey. Social Darwinism, which was the Darwinist theory applied to sociology, considered religion as belonging to a backward phase of human evolution.

Freudianism or psychoanalysis, on the other hand, depravedly reduced the entire human psychology to sexual impulses.

In this blustery gale;

Tevfik Fikret, Beşir Fuad, Hüseyin Cahit, Abdullah Cevdet and others penned books, poems, novels and conjured many lies that sought to slander and disparage Islam. They translated into Turkish works of orientalist that tried defaming the Prophet (SAW).

For example;

In his poem, *Tarih-i Kadime Zeyl* (An Addendum to Ancient History), Tevfik Fikret glorified atheism and insulted the Qur'an by calling it "The ancient book". And in another poem titled *Haluk'un Amentüsü* (Haluk's Confession of Faith), he attempted to come up with a profession of faith alternate to that of Islam.

The below words from that poem, which rebuff any attachment to the land or people of Turkey:

"*The world is my homeland, and the human species my nation*" is, more or less, the same as the slogan of the Deism Society founded in Istanbul in 2018.

Again,

Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın translated orientalist Leone Caetani's slanderous *History of Islam*, as well as Emile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* into Turkish and published them in newspapers.

People like Tevfik Fikret and Ahmed Riza effectively became the Turkish salespersons of positivist, materialist, Darwinist and psychoanalytic theories that promoted irreligiosity. They distributed the anti-religious works of figures like August Comte, Ernest Renan and Reinhart Dozy.

By establishing seditious political factions, these people also played a part in bringing about the demise of the Ottoman Empire; and beyond

their literary publications, they also imposed their ideas onto teachers and a generation of students by influencing the ministry of education and the western inspired intellectuals raised by that generation, contaminated an entire education system.

Sadly, an anti-religious reflex inherited from that era still persists in a number of academic and pseudo-intellectual circles.

THE MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO SCIENCE

During the era mentioned, religion and science were portrayed as opposites both in Europe and Turkey. Consequently, generations interested in science were alienated from religion. Yet, a closer inspection of history shows the great service Muslims have lent to science and inventions.

For example;

- Muslims invented the science of algebra and numbers including zero, which reached Europe via Muslim lands.
- During the time of the Abbasid Caliph Mamun (786-833), after conducting topographical surveys and measurements across East Turkestan and Kufa, Ahmad ibn Musa and his brothers calculated the length of the equator as 39 thousand kilometres, with a 2.5% margin for error.
- Muslim geniuses are responsible for the most ground-breaking discoveries in the history of science; most notably Khwarizmi in mathematics, Jabir ibn Hayyan in chemistry, Abu'l-Izz Ismail Al-Jazari in mechanics, Farghani and Battani in astronomy, and Ibn Sina in medicine.

For instance, it was the Muslims who turned geography into a science. The travel books of Evliya Çelebi (1611-1682) who journeyed through many countries in the world and Ibn Battuta (1304-1369) who voyaged from one continent to another non-stop for 29 years, are historical and geographical treasures.

Christopher Columbus (1446-1506) admits that he found out about the existence of America from Muslims, most specifically the books of Ibn Rushd.

Centuries before that, Biruni (973-1048) mentioned the existence of America, while in his *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, Piri Reis (1465-1554) drew a map of Europe. Even today, Piri Reis' world map is an enigma that still has historians baffled. The map accurately depicts Greenland as consisting of three

land masses. Yet, this was discovered only after man actually set foot on the islands.

Around 800 years ago, Idrisi (1100-1166) was able to sketch maps of the world that are almost identical to the ones we have today.

Plus, we must not forget that;

Most of the Western explorers like Christopher Columbus, Magellan and Amerigo Vespucci were bandits. They were thieves and plunderers who, for years and years, exploited, enslaved and killed innocent people across Africa and the Americas.

The real explorers were the Muslim figures of the likes of Ibn Battuta and Evliya Çelebi. They let the rest of the world find out about the lands they visited in the best possible way, without causing any harm to the local people.

Moving onto another field, as one of the most distinguished figures of the philosophy of history, Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) is also regarded the founder of sociology, with his *Muqaddimah* still shining a light on the world of knowledge today.

And with any mention of architecture, the first name that naturally springs to mind is Mimar Sinan (1489-1588), whose glorious structures, to this day, appeal to both the senses and the heart. With their observatories and space maps, Uluğ Bey and Ali Kuşçu are trailblazers in the history of astronomy.

Today, however, many works written on science make no mention of these discoveries, endeavouring instead to keep the limelight permanently on Western inventions. It is a denial that simply shows a lack of respect and gratitude.

As for the East, it is oblivious to its own treasures due to a crippling inferiority complex.

But the truth is, the West owes its progress to the scientific wealth amassed by Muslims. Europe was introduced to science through the knowledge it acquired from the civilisation of Baghdad during the Crusades and the universities of Muslim Spain; and only afterwards was it able to embark upon its own path of progress.

The late scholar Fuad Sezgin had dedicated his life to proving and conveying this point and among many things, his lifelong research shows that;

Today's Eurocentric approach credits Roger Bacon (1219-1292) as the first person to apply mathematics in natural sciences, and Levi Ben Gerson (1288-1344) as the inventor of the 'dark room', which provides the foundation of optics and photography. Yet, in both cases, the precedence belongs to Ibn Haytham (d. 1041).

Regiomontanus(d. 1476)is acclaimed for developing trigonometry as a separate science. But it was rather Nasiruddin Tusi (d. 1274).

The idea of a heliocentric model of the universe is traced back to Copernicus and Kepler. The fact is that both these scientists were under the influence of Muslim scholars, primarily Al-Zarkali of Muslim Spain (11th century).

Hundreds more examples can be adduced from each scientific field. (Fuad Sezgin, İslam'da Bilim ve Teknik, 2008, Kültür A.Ş., v. I, p. 163-166)

In contrast,

As late as the 16th century, Europe remained stubbornly intolerant to scientific knowledge.

Thanks to the translations of the works by Muslim scientists, facts about astronomy had begun to spread throughout Europe. Contrary to what the Church had argued, Galileo began to assert that the earth rotated. As a result, he was convicted of heresy and fronted the inquisition court. He faced the death penalty. His punishment was overturned to a lifelong house arrest, only after he retracted his initial statement. But as he walked out of the courtroom, he could not help but remark to his awaiting friends:

"And even if I say otherwise, the earth still rotates!"

Muslims, therefore, have no reason to feel inferior when any mention is made of scientific progress.

To give another example;

In developing their own systems of thought, Europe's most important intellectuals such as Thomas Aquinas, Pascal, Descartes and David Hume made use of the works of Imam Ghazzali.

But in recent years, we have been made to forget all of this, while our eyes were glued to the television and the internet as they spilled their venom into our homes and our phones, using the music, film, advertising and fashion industries as mercenaries.

Amid this chaos, the faith of Muslims has become a target for the onslaught of Islam's enemies, and one of their weapons is deism.

DEISM

Deism is a symptom of the age of ignorance. Some of the Arabs back then also said:

"There is one Allah, who created man, the earth, the heavens and the universe; and who brings down the rain. But He has not sent a prophet, a book or a law. We will not be resurrected to face trial or punishment!" and alongside Allah (JJ), they worshipped idols.

The pagans of the time, unsettled by the Qur'an's revelation about life after death, as it encroached on their ambitions and desires, asked the Prophet (SAW) to change these verses into something that was more appealing to them and they came to him and said:

"Bring us a Qur'an that has no mention of rebirth after death, or at least remove the parts where it talks about resurrection and the afterlife!" (Zajaj, *Maani'l-Qur'an wa 'Irabuhu*, III, 11)

"Bring us a Qur'an that does not command us to quit worshipping the idols Lat and Uzza.

If Allah does not reveal to you a Qur'an of such, then formulate one or alter what has come to you from Allah in this manner:

- Replace the verses of punishment with verses of mercy,
- Remove harams and replace them with halals!" (Wahidi, p. 270; Alusi, XI, 85)

About them, the Qur'an declared:

"When Our Clear Signs are recited to them, those who do not expect to meet Us say,

'Bring us a Qur'an other than this one or change it!'

Say: 'It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I follow nothing except what is revealed to me. I fear, were I to disobey my Lord, the punishment of a Dreadful Day!'" (Yunus, 10: 15)

It is clear that people who subscribe to this false creed called deism, act as though they accept a creator; yet, even there, they are not referring to the true Creator Allah but an anthropomorphic being they have conjured in

their imagination. Undoubtedly, this is nothing but a rejection of the One Allah (JJ), His commands, prophets, revelations, the day of judgment and the afterlife.

Completely denying the existence of Allah the Almighty is as silly as trying to reject the existence of the sun in the scorching afternoon heat. Because of this, the deist manner of denial is based on supposedly accepting Allah (JJ) as creator but rejecting His authority as God; namely, His power to instruct human beings, educate them and allot to them rewards and punishments. This amounts to believing in a dead idol, an imaginary conception of god, invalid and void, whose strings are held by man to play with as he wishes, and with which to condone his most evil desires. On one hand, you have an All-Mighty Power who has created billions of micro-universes inside the cosmos and makes them revolve at every second, while on the other, a hollow idol forced to resign all his power to his servants and creatures. If the latter was the case, would not the entire universe implode?

What deists envisage is an imaginary god that is god in name only. An idol that gives no orders and that does not punish tyranny. An idol without any notion of right and justice. An idol that does not teach any moral values. An idol without any mercy and compassion for the oppressed. An idol that ignores the oppressed and turns a blind eye on cruelty. A fake invention conceived by the imagination!

Such a belief defies all logic. It is simply an eclipse of reason.

The pagan Greeks had a form of deism, forced by the logical need to accept a "Prime Mover", that is to say, an original being that spun the entire cosmos into motion. This way, they could carry on venerating both their idols and their idolised minds, and at the same time, appease their consciences by believing in a creator their reason compelled them to accept.

In the past few centuries, a similar tendency has arisen in the Christian world. After the corrupted Christianity suffered a complete death blow at the hands of reason, science and humanism, people began rejecting the authority of its institutions such as the Church and the papacy.

We all know that;

Christianity is now an entirely human construct. Its foundations were laid down by Paul, who was not a prophet. Its belief system was developed by councils under the scrutiny and pressure of emperors. The festivals they celebrate today, such as Christmas, are celebrations they incorporated into

Christianity much later. This religion is constructed by man to such an extent that just a few years ago, cardinals convened in the Vatican to canonise the last pope as a saint and declare him 'heaven-bound'.

A religion of this kind certainly has no power to comfort neither the intellect, nor the conscience, nor the heart. It is for this reason that deism took hold in the West as a way to escape the superstitions of the Church and the clergy, while retaining belief in god.

THE AFTERLIFE IS REAL!...

Judging by these turbulent winds gusting across the globe, one can truly call our times an age of ignorance. And the primary sign of such an age is the denial of the afterlife.

Following the ego leads to tyranny and injustice. The ego enjoins selfishness, greed, pride and arrogance, all of which result in countless sins committed against the Almighty and His servants.

Believing in an ultimate day of reckoning encourages a person to embody justice and good morals; and be meticulous in observing the rights of others. Simpler put, faith in the afterlife guides a person to piety.

But those enslaved by their egos find the news of an afterlife disturbing.

At one time, Istanbul's council had installed a sign at the gates of Zincirlikuyu Cemetery inscribed with the verse from the Qur'an:

"Every soul will taste death..." (Al-Ankabut, 29: 57);

Some journalists then asked for it to be removed, saying "We pass this road every day and reading the sign dampens our spirits!"

Stemming a desire to escape the inescapable that cemeteries are often built on the outskirts of modern cities.

What a far cry this is from the times of the Ottoman Empire, when cemeteries were always found in city-centres and in the courtyards of mosques, so that people could never forget their mortality and that to their Lord they will one certainly return.

In this ignorant age, which is too busy propagating ideologies such as atheism, deism and secularism, there is no room for death and the afterlife. Being humane and compassionate have no place. But space is aplenty for ruthlessness and barbarism. We have seen this throughout history in Anda-

lusia and during the Crusades. We saw it more recently in Caucasia, Bosnia and Iraq and right now, we are witnessing it in Syria, Yemen and Myanmar.

Since the beginning of Islam people were also keen on fleeing the after-life and the first verses revealed in the Qur'an warned them with fearsome scenes of judgment and the hereafter.

The pagans referred to resurrection after death as "The Big News";

They anxiously began debating with one another, exclaiming, "What if the big news is true? What if there is an afterlife? What will happen if we are resurrected?" The Qur'an recounts:

عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿١﴾ عَنِ النَّبَاِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٣﴾

"About what are they asking one another? About the big news? About which they disagree?" (Al-Naba, 78: 1-3)

And in today's modern age of ignorance, people staggering in the maze of an egoistic life are also scuttling to flee the hereafter.

But alas!

"On that Day man will say, 'Where can I run?.' No indeed! There will be no safe place.' " (Al-Qiyamah, 75: 9-10)

We must not forget that;

Since time immemorial, and despite being guided by prophets, humankind has been perplexed by the thought of death. It is a question that has nested in human minds like a venomous snake and has, time and again, writhed and slithered much to the disturbance of egos, which have tried yet failed to quash it with fear and panic. Yet, inasmuch as death will inescapably descend on every breathing soul and considering that it is the primal fear of all human beings, getting used to its thought and preparing for its arrival in the best and most beautiful way possible, should be the priority.

Life in the grave and in the hereafter is impossible to picture through cognition. It is only made clear through revelation and the explanations of prophets. It is a lot healthier to embrace this future reality which every prophet, especially our Own (SAW) has informed people about, remaining indifferent to death, like deists and atheists, and brushing it under the carpet, is simply stupidity.

If there was no afterlife, this universe and our existence would make no sense.

So, we must reflect with a clear mind:

- Why are people born into the world?
- On whose property do we live?
- Who assigned all this creation to the service of humans and why?
- Where will this journey end?
- Where is the universe flowing towards?

To move onto another matter, Hind, who was a fervent pagan during the age of ignorance, was startled to hear that Islam treated slaves and their masters equal. She protested:

“What kind of a religion is this? How can I be on an equal standing with a slave?”, and consequently rebelled against the order of justice and equality.

NO RELIGION WITHOUT LAW

While deism comes in different forms, they all desire a religion without laws, rules and principles; simply, a religion without the halal and the haram. In a way, they imply, “Let religion be in line with my whims! Let it not interfere in my wishes and obsessions!”

Yet, just as Allah the Almighty has embedded the cosmos with order, He has also sent humankind a law.

The Qur’an states:

“He erected heaven and established the balance, so that you would not transgress the balance.” (Al-Rahman, 55: 7-8)

The purpose of being created is to serve the Lord and the world is a school of trial to test whether creation lives up to this purpose or not. Lazy students never want tests or assignments. But little do they know that without them, there would be no such thing as a school.

In contrast;

Diligent students thrive on tests and assignments, and prepare for them heartily, knowing that their primary reason for being at the school is to complete their education.

Tyrants never hope for justice. Neither do the ruthless ever wish for mercy and to the rest that do, they simply say "Tough luck!"

And today;

Lands no longer sprinkled with the seeds of compassion and instead forced to convulse under bombs dropped from high above, have truly become lands of grief. Countries like Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Myanmar and Palestine, invaded and pillaged by today's capitalist hordes, have been transformed into terrains of heartache and misery. This is because the capitalist world has traded its mercy for brutality.

The word mercy no longer rings a bell with man, who has lost his greatest treasure and the key to all happiness.

For a Muslim, however, mercy is like an eternal fire burning inside the heart. What separates a Muslim from a non-Muslim is the greater compassion he feels. Unbelievers have no mercy.

Mercy is a divine attribute that testifies to our claim of being human and takes us closer to Allah the Almighty through a gateway running from the heart.

For instance, the first lesson fasting teaches is mercy. It opens up the eye of our heart blocked by a lack of pity.

Accordingly, institutions where religion is taught must also be schools of mercy. If egoism, instead of love, creeps through their walls, the tree of mercy will dry out before it ever buds.

In that respect:

To make humans understand that creation can never be without purpose, the Qur'an asks:

"Does man reckon he will be left to go on unchecked?" (Al-Qiyamah, 75: 36)

"Did you suppose that We created you for amusement and that you would not be returned to Us?" (Al-Muminun, 23: 115)

The world is filled with negativity.

Think of how it would be if a serial killer was released without charge!

Think about how it would be to let a wild wolf roam among a herd of lambs!

Man breaches the law, violates justice and commits many atrocities on earth. It is equally inconceivable to assume he will get off scot-free, without facing an ultimate reckoning.

It defies all logic to suppose that this grand cosmos and the human being fashioned in the most perfect form, are left alone to do as they please. Taking this thought seriously is nothing but stamping one's own mind with a seal of cancellation. Even countries governed by the most pro-freedom political systems are full of prisons; and these prisons are often full.

If religion was determined by the human mind, there would be as many religions as minds, which would then lead to a muddled world of billions of religions. Nobody would take each other seriously and people would simply be out to refute each other's claims.

This is precisely why until today; philosophers have carried the inherent urge to disclaim each other. Greek philosophers idolised reason, giving birth to a host of other mythical gods that all supposedly shared family relations. The same philosophers used their minds to enchain the masses who they regarded as herds, handing them nothing but devastation. Consequently, the books of the likes of Aristotle and others were consigned to the dusty shelves of libraries. They could shine a guiding light on neither themselves nor humanity.

In contrast;

Prophets have come to this world, one after another, confirming the truth of each other's call and establishing a peace and true justice that envelops the entire society.

Today, 'global culture' has invaded every corner of Muslim lands, like a marauding army. Advertisements that seduce the ego, fashion that triggers extravagance and waste, damaging television shows, the dark side of the internet and a spell of negative messages and propaganda are spearheading spiritual erosion. Hearts and minds are left in shambles.

Ends and means are cluttered. Life is reduced to consumption and pleasure. Hearts are enslaved to the world, while souls are enchained by lust, and a lack of spiritual contentment leads individuals to depression and society into a crisis.

People are instilled with an outlook on life that is free of the slightest concern for the hereafter. The indoctrination of the materialist West, that wishes sever the Islamic world from its core values, is leading humankind

away from religion one step at a time and dragging people into the pits of a spiritual crisis. Sadly, amid all this, Islam is not being properly learnt, taught or demonstrated.

Allow me to share a personal memory from around twenty or thirty years ago:

The former secretary of the French Communist Party, Roger Garaudy had come to Istanbul for a conference at Yıldız Palace. Someone asked him:

“A while back, you were such a die-hard communist that you even codified the ideas of Marx from start to end and now, you are a Muslim. I would like to know why you rejected your Catholic upbringing to become communist, and what made you finally turn to Islam.”

He said:

“Yes, I was once a Catholic. Then I went to the United States to study. It was a time when capitalist trusts burnt tonnes and tonnes of wheat, and poured away millions of litres of milk to waste, just to retain their monopoly on the market. My conscience could not but rebel against such ruthlessness, and that rebellion pushed me to communism.

But later, I found that communism was simply dry. It parched spirits. So, I tried bridging communism with Catholicism, to give it a bit of spirituality but it did not work; and for a while, I was intellectually stranded.

This was around the time when the government basically wanted me dead. But an officer turned a blind eye to me and I was able to escape.

Being a sociologist, I was curious as to why he let me go without shooting at me. Later, I tracked him down and asked:

“Why did you let me go?” He said:

“I am a Muslim and I do not know what your crime is. Neither do I know why they want you dead. I just did not want to be part of it. So, when you started fleeing, I looked the other way.”

Until then, I used to think Islam was a tribal religion, and then I became curious. Being also an economist, I wanted to start researching Islam with its notion of economy:

I first wished to find out about Islam's take on interest. Communism prohibited interest, as it was a system of exploitation. So, what was interest according to Islam? I was eager to know.

I breathed a sigh of relief after reading up on an incident involving Bilal (RA). One day, Bilal takes a date to the Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) looks at the date and asks:

"Where did you get this from?"

He says:

"We had some bad dates. So, we bartered two scales of those bad dates for one scale of good dates, for you to eat."

The Prophet (SAW) then says:

"Oh no! That is interest right there! Do not do it again!"

And he then explains the right way:

"If you want to buy good dates, first sell the ones you have separately; then purchase those dates with that money." (Bukhari, Wakalah, 11)

Seeing that the Prophet (SAW) did not show any compromise in the prohibition of interest whatsoever, I felt compelled to inspect Islam further.

At that point, I stumbled upon a master of law by the name of Abu Hanifah, and what a splendid approach to law he had! He relieved my mind and showed me the way.

But let me add that the Muslim world sadly does not properly appreciate a world-class jurist of the calibre of Abu Hanifah, and ironically, it is I who had to explain Abu Hanifah's legal approach, when I entered Islam just recently.

As Muslims, you are healthy but you think you are sick, so you try to imitate the ailing West. Which healthy person, in his right mind, would ever do that?"

This means that before anything, we need to take note of our own core values. We must appreciate our spiritual treasures. Otherwise, we would be no different to a person who dies of starvation despite sitting on a fortune!

The Western world is, indeed, ailing. The reason is that it is self-seeking and pragmatist; and under the principle, "Let them be, let them pass", it condones every kind of evil. Christianity cannot feed spirits because it itself is empty. The first mortal blow on Christianity came from Paul. He abolished the law and said:

“Believe in the trinity; that is the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost and do not worry about the rest!”

“You are no longer bound by the law of the Torah. It is the Caesar’s duty to enforce laws!”

In other words, he was saying:

“Live as you please to your ego’s content. Kings will impose the laws of your worldly affairs!”

And this suited the kings. Then, one after another, the Christian councils convened. These councils revamped the Christian belief in line with their own understanding. Men decided on what people should believe.

In 325, the Council of Nicaea determined that Jesus (AS) is God.

The 381 Council of Istanbul also accepted the Holy Spirit as God.

The Council of Ephesus in 431 ascribed Mary (AS) the title “the Mother of God”. It decreed that Jesus (AS) was of a dual nature, both god and man.

In 451, the Council of Chalcedon excommunicated the Eastern Churches (the Copts, Armenians, Assyrians and Abyssinians) for holding onto the view that Jesus (AS) had only one nature, namely that of god.

The Second Council of Nicaea convened in 787 to abolish the ban on worshipping religious icons. Yet, a fierce debate on the matter had ensued for around two hundred years prior to it, with some emperors even banning the iconography altogether.

Orthodox Christians accept the first seven councils. Catholics recognise a total of twenty-one councils, with the last one taking place in 1965. That council held by the Vatican Church called for ‘dialogue’ between different denominations and religions.

It was during all those councils that the doctrines of today’s Christianity were shaped. The law was abolished and eviscerated. The church was given the right to absolve sins in exchange for money. One man was handed the power to forgive the sins of another.

In contrast, Islam is under divine protection in its entirety. We have the same Qur’an Allah the Almighty revealed to our Prophet (SAW) without any alteration.

Thanks to centuries of diligent work, we also have our Prophet's (SAW) practices and tradition, known as the Sunnah.

The schools of Islamic law, which emerged in the first centuries through the legal rulings of the companions' and their students, are still standing today.

In spite of all this, some still ludicrously claim that:

- Islam needs to undergo reform.
- Legal schools are essentially useless.
- Most if not all the hadith are fabricated.
- The Qur'an's verses are 'local and historical' and therefore, in this day and age, they need not be applied.

With all this, they attempt to reform Islam just like they did with Christianity.

Yet, as the final true religion, Islam is under guaranteed divine protection until the day of judgment. This path, which we refer to as *Ahl-u Sunnah wa'l-Jamaah*, is explained by the Prophet (SAW) as:

"In every era until the day of judgment, a group among my nation will emerge and fight to reveal the truth and keep it alive. They always receive the help of Allah, and consequently, are always victorious." (Muslim, Iman, 247; Imarah, 173)

As the only true religion, Islam is perfect. A thing that is perfect stands in no need for something inferior. Islam does not need to borrow a prosthetic limb from any manmade system or corrupted religion.

Regrettably, polemicists who flock to television screens; and, exploiting the ignorance of the general public, rant and rave about religious matters, vent their own deviances to undermine the basic principles of Islam and propagate the ideas of orientalist as their own and corrupt innocent minds.

If a person does not follow a school of law, trust the hadith of the Prophet (SAW) or believe in the relevance of the Qur'an today, then what is he left with?

All he is left with are concealed tactics of disbelief, like deism. These are nothing more than traps to destroy the foundations of Islam.

It is barely a coincidence that the one name that springs to mind in Turkey when any mention is made of a reformist, modernist theologian, has written a separate book to make deism fashionable. Also, the brochure of the Turkish Deism Society founded in 2018, extends a special thanks to him, as well as another theologian famous for rejecting the Sunnah.²

Our responsibility is to prove that deism can never amount to the true faith of Islam; and to expose how this foreign creed, which is a product of a mentality of ignorance, is no different to other forms of disbelief, including atheism.

We are obliged to explain to our people the importance of faith. If faith is a light in the candle of our hearts, we need a lantern to protect it from the harsh winds of denial.

And that lantern is nothing but:

- Practising what we believe.
- Avoiding prohibited deeds.
- Doing righteous deeds, having direction and committing to piety.
- Accompanying pious people.

This is because;

“Those who do not live what they believe, end up believing what they live.”

As Imam Shafii has warned:

“If you do not occupy yourself with the truth, the false will come and occupy you.”

We are told that it is becoming more common among young people to say “I am a deist!” or “I am a modernist!” But little do they realise that it primarily stems from a blind imitation of illogical Western ideologies.

Sadly, the university environments today are now more conducive to the spread of these kinds of viruses. To cure it, we must recall what ‘true education’ is.

Parents send their children to these environments with their own hands, thinking they will receive an education.

2. http://deizmdernegi.org/Deizm_Derneği_Kuruluş_Deklarasyonu

But tertiary settings come with certain dangers:

- An egoistic and estranged life style steeped in recklessness and confusion; the mingling of males and females, a promotion of deviance in thought and practice, and an erosion of character.

Against these, it is necessary to protect the heart.

As Imam Ghazzali has rightly said, friendship with sinners, in time, leads to a mental friendship; and this, after a while, turns into a friendship of heart and this drags man into destruction one step at a time. It was for this reason that the wives of Noah (AS) and Lot (AS) became destined for hell.

While passing through the rubbles of the Thamud Tribe destroyed centuries ago, the Prophet (SAW) told his companions to:

"Pass quickly and with grief! Do not collect water from here; if you have already done so, pour it out!" (See, Bukhari, Anbiya, 17)

With this in mind, let us spare a moment to think about the plight of our people today, who, day and night, are transfixed on their phones and television screens to keep up with the latest entertainment broadcasts of disbelievers, and are incessantly exposed to their propaganda.

If we neglect our duty to educate our children and fail in our efforts to make them like the good and detest the evil, then we would be exposing them to the harm of others. The Qur'an tells us that the devil becomes party to our children. Biological parenthood means nothing. If the child is being breastfed by the devil and the deviant, he becomes their child not ours.

So, we need to be careful.

- We need to shield our children against the decadent ideas imported from modernists and orientalist, by armouring them with authentic religious knowledge.

Our Prophet (SAW) advised Abdullah ibn Umar :

"Son of Umar!

Seize hold of your religion, seize hold of your religion!

For it is your flesh and blood! Beware from whom you learn your religion! Learn its teachings and rulings from the upright, not from the deviant!"
(Hatib Al-Baghdadi, *al-Kifaya fi Ilmi'r-Riwayah*, p. 121)

THE THREE TRIBULATIONS

Today, three tribulations stand in the way of Islamic education:

- First: By portraying the schools of Islamic legal thought as irrelevant, people are being misled into believing they can be their own jurists. As a result, even the most ignorant people are now trying to pass legal opinions and judgements. This is the weakening of a religion protected by Allah the Almighty and suits those trying to force open a space for deism.

Yet, these schools are legal traditions that compile the most authentic rulings of Muslim jurists in authenticated chains of transmission starting from the Prophet's (SAW) own companions. Subscribing to one of them, is a must. It is impermissible to abandon them, as they are the only surviving unbroken chain of teachings.

- Second: They try to cast doubt in people's outlook on the Prophet's (SAW) Sunnah by resorting to the trick of pretending to put the Qur'an at the forefront.

But the fact of the matter is that the Holy Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet's (SAW) heart and it was the Prophet (SAW) who communicated the Qur'an and taught it to people. The most competent interpretation of the Qur'an is our Prophet's (SAW) Sunnah. The Sunnah is the Qur'an in action. It is not separate from the Qur'an. It is certainly not something that can be cut off from it.

The Qur'an and the Sunnah are Islam's two main arteries; its two most fundamental building blocks.

- Third: The Qur'an comes with rulings, which are our Lord's instructions for us. These people are seeking to shelve these commands, which their egos find hard to fulfil. They call this effort, historicism. They seek to abolish some of the Qur'an's rulings, saying, "This verse is only binding for the people of that time." This is no different than the devil's attempt to quarrel with Allah the Almighty. We all know that when the Almighty created Adam (AS), He commanded the angels to:

"Prostrate to Adam!"

This was not an act of worship but a show of respect. Satan could not contain his pride; he became jealous of Adam (AS) and rejected the divine order. When he was asked why he did not prostrate, instead of imploring:

"I followed my ego. Please, forgive me, My Lord!"

He offered a meaningless excuse based on a flawed analogy, saying:

“I was made of fire, while Adam is of soil. I am superior to him!”

But Allah the Almighty never asked the devil, “Who is superior; you or Adam?”

The Almighty simply commanded him to prostrate to Adam (AS).

Thus, Satan became the first to quarrel with Allah (JJ) and as punishment for his impudence; he was banished from the divine presence and promised an eternal damnation. (See, Al-Araf, 12-23; Sad, 71-78)

Such is the ugly state of historicism.

As a book of guidance until the final hour, Allah the Almighty has graced entire humankind with the Generous Qur'an. He will neither send another prophet, nor another book. Arguing that a book of this nature has even a single ruling that has passed its use-by date is disbelief.

It is sad that in many fields of theology today, students are being drilled in the unfounded ideas of Islam's enemies like Caetani, Goldziher and others, all in the name of knowledge. This turns the students' spiritual life into a mess and it must be borne in mind that those who teach these to students, are also under a heavy spiritual burden.

To recap, the three tribulations mentioned are:

- The rejection of Islamic legal schools,
- The denial of the Sunnah,
- And the annulment of Islamic law.

Their rise has increased scepticism towards Islamic sciences; and sadly yet deliberately, push the youth into the clutches of deism.

The only solution is to teach them the correct way.

Young people who learn Islam in the correct way, will not drink from the poisoned chalice held out by orientlists and the enemies of Islam, no matter how sparkling it may deceptively appear.

Rumi (QS) says:

“Before reading the verses of the Qur'an and words of the Blessed Prophet (SAW), correct yourself!

If you cannot smell the scents in a garden of roses, do not blame the garden. Blame your heart and your nose!"

Properly learning Islamic values today requires a serious education. Summer schools are not enough to learn the Quran as it deserves.

Our Prophet (SAW) taught his companions Islam for 23 years. Islam needs to be an education that is lived and practiced for a lifetime. Also, one must learn it from pious scholars in order to live and breathe it.

The public, however, whose knowledge of Islam consists of what they have learned from a mere stint at mosques during the summer or the weekly lessons they had at school, are thrown into doubt after watching people on television debate about religion. If their subjective emotions get involved to fuel their doubt, they tend to cross out everything they have learned.

Today, the mentality of ignorance coming from the West plagues all aspects of society.

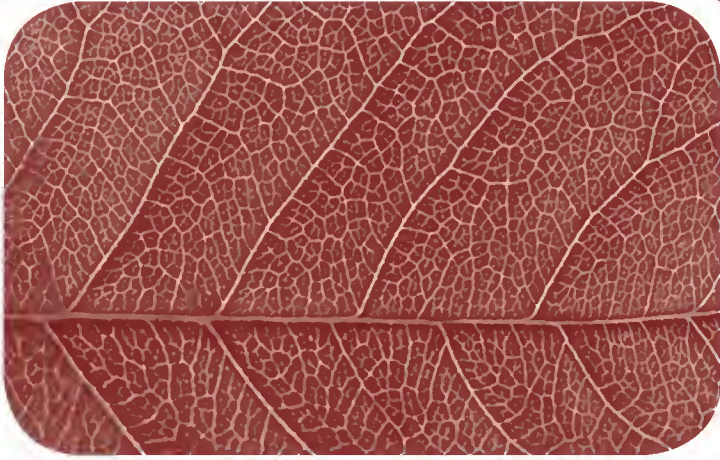
But we cannot despair. The solution is to convey the truth like our Prophet (SAW) did. Every person must strive within his own means. It is especially unacceptable for people with a capacity to teach Islam, to resign to their corner.

Despite this rampant ignorance, if some Qur'an schools still struggle with enrolment, this means we are not doing enough.

- We must remind our people that the true life is the afterlife.
- We must explain to them that we will be called to account for every action.
- We must tell them that the reason we have been created is to know our Lord and serve Him.
- We need to serve the Almighty's religion by living it and ensuring that it lives on. In return, our Lord promises His help during our final breaths.

May Allah the Almighty help us all towards it.

Amin!



IS DENIAL POSSIBLE?



Sheikh Sadi says:

“For the intelligent, each leaf is a book of divine knowledge. But for the ignorant, all the trees do not amount to a single leaf.”

IS DENIAL POSSIBLE?

The entire universe is a school. This school provides education in divine knowledge. The teacher is our Blessed Prophet (SAW). Everything in this universe is a laboratory inside this school. For all eyes that can see, everything testifies to Allah (JJ), informs of Him and points the way to Him.

The Almighty's first command in the Qur'an is:

"Read in the name of your Lord, who created!" (Al-Alaq, 96: 1)

The Almighty has granted everything on the earth, in the skies, in the human being and the cosmos, as a sign and material with which to contemplate His oneness and power.

For hearts that see, hear and feel, there is nothing in this universe that is not an indicator of divine majesty and glory.

Shame on the lazy hearts heedless to the manifestations of the Almighty's names "The Designer" (*Al-Bari*) and "The Fashioner" (*Al-Musawwir*); and remain unresponsive to the silent languages of the winds, rivers and mountains!

As for the reason why forms of denial such as deism resonate with the youth, one must search for it in negative propaganda. Otherwise, scholars of the Maturidi school of theology, to which we subscribe, say:

"A person to whom no divine book or prophet has reached, must naturally acknowledge the existence and oneness of Allah."

In other words, the universe is a school of contemplation. To live here without believing, one has to be insane. He has to be blind. He has to have cancelled out his own reason.

At the face of all the lively colours he perceives while gazing at a spring-time scenery, a man would say:

"I could see nothing but green!". He was too absorbed in the vivid tones of the spring scenery to notice the light that made entire spectacle possible; when it was only thanks to light that he was able to see all those

colours. Here, the light was hidden from sight, only due to the intensity of its appearance.

A saint says:

"Allah the Almighty is not really invisible. He is invisible only due to our limited capacity to see and grasp the strength of His visibility."

As this world is a place of a trial, our Lord is Hidden (bâtin). If He were to show palpable signs, faith would no longer be a choice and this life would cease to be a test.

But insofar as everything is His creation and, as such, bears witness to His majesty and power, our Lord is, at the same time, Outwardly Manifest (Dhâhir).

Allah the Almighty is evident through His attributes, which are embroidered upon every single creation.

Besides, our Prophet (SAW) said:

"Reflect on beings Allah has created (that is to say, think about the manifestations of the Lord's attributes in the universe; as well as His existence and glory.)"

"Do not reflect on Allah's essence, for you will never be able to properly grasp and appreciate it..." (Daylami, *Musnad*, II, 56; Haythami, *Majmau'z-Zawaid*, I, 81)

Likewise;

We live thanks to air; yet, even though it entirely surrounds us, we cannot see it. We only feel it when we take a breath. But, let alone deny its existence based on the fact we do not see it, we rightly say:

"We cannot live without air."

Also like us are marine animals. They live in the sea, yet do not even notice it, despite being entirely surrounded by it.

To think from another angle;

Our Lord is Transcendent. He is beyond our cognition. He is Supreme and exempt from being grasped by the human mind.

But, at the same time, He is Near. He is closer to us than our jugular vein. If we can feel, we can also receive His message from every experience,

at every moment. We are fed by what He provides. We pray to Him. We implore Him. We witness Him accepting our prayers.

A clear mind understands that:

For the wise, every being is a proof for His existence. But for the unmindful, everything is cause for even greater heedlessness.”

Rumi (QS) explains this as:

“If you place two fingers in front of your eyes, you will not be able to see anything.”

This is what being neglectful means. May Allah protect us all.

Atheism is to be blind, deaf and dumb in the face of the Almighty’s infinite power and unrivalled wisdom embroidered upon the cosmos. Ahmed Hilmi of Filibe says it brilliantly:

*The cosmos is a gallery of beauty for the wise
But for the fool, to eat and lust with prying eyes*

In being prone to reject what it does not see, atheism is no different to denying its own soul and reason. No one is able to perceive the soul and reason; yet, everybody knows that their entire physical existence hinges on both.

It is for that reason that even the most rational Western thinkers were unable to deny the existence of the creator.

THE PERFECT BEING

Descartes (1594-1650), credited as the father of modern philosophy and rationalism, summarises reasoning for his “ontological argument” as:

“Everything in man and in the universe is perfect. Nothing is in vain. Nothing can give itself perfection. A being receives its perfection from a more perfect being (that is God). God is the most perfect of all beings. It is impossible to imagine the absence of the idea of ‘the most perfect being’ in human reason even if there was no other proof, this would suffice to prove the existence of God.”

“God is the most perfect, flawless being who neither deceives nor is deceived himself. Accordingly, the knowledge of Him is also flawless and certain. The knowledge of God is the basis of all certain knowledge.”

Pascal confirms the same view:

“There is a sound that comes from the depths of our soul and which convinces us of its immortality; and this is God’s call of guidance that transpires in our being.”

These are confessions from non-Muslims.

Indeed;

In the face of this perfect order in the universe and all this ecological balance, for man to suppose that he has been created in vain and attempt to live irresponsibly like other creatures, is nothing short of absurd. Yet, the Almighty has declared:

“Did you suppose that We created you for amusement and that you would not be returned to Us?” (Al-Muminun, 23: 115)

Organisms were created for man; and man, to worship Allah. Otherwise, creation would have no meaning.

If man lives by this purpose, he will return to paradise. The human being is created noble. He must purify himself to become worthy of the magnificent reward.

That is why the Almighty helps humans by opening up their minds through prophets and divine books, and displaying countless instances of His power and glory within the cosmos.

He reproaches people of an atheist mind set with the question:

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ

“Or were they created out of nothing, or are they the creators?” (Al-Tur, 52: 35)

In this life, the Almighty has not given humans a manifestation of two of His attributes:

- Creation
- Immortality

Man lacks the power to create from nothing. He has certainly invented things; yet, these consist of assembling things already created by Allah (JJ).

No manmade machine has the power to give birth to another machine. No aeroplane can produce another aeroplane.

Man exists completely inside a universe created by the Almighty; and wherever he looks, he unavoidably see beings created by the Lord, including himself.

Man also lacks immortality. Apart from Allah the Almighty, all beings are mortal.

The Qur'an states:

"Every self will taste death..." (Al-i Imran, 3: 185)

"Everyone on it will pass away" (Al-Rahman, 55: 26)

"All things are passing except His Face. Judgement belongs to Him. You will be returned to Him." (Al-Qasas, 28: 88)

It is for this reason that, as a reminder, gravestones are inscribed with the words:

هُوَ الْبَاقِي: *Huwa'l-Baqii*: Only He is Immortal.

The magnificent harmony and order in the universe is also proof of the Almighty's oneness and existence. Ismail Fenni Ertuğrul writes:

"From the particle to the whole, everything on earth makes us witness Allah's divine art. There is not even a need for a thorough examination. Even a cursory look at any given fragment of the cosmos is enough to recognise the work of a powerful hand as their 'first cause'. Our minds and bodies, as well as animals, the planets, stars, the earth and the skies, all embody a perfect order and coherence. This art directs us to a higher mind, the spirit of the entire universe, if you like, graceful yet invisible but which commands a supreme power that directs all creatures towards their purpose. Both in the creation of the universe and in every single one of its atoms, we observe a complete proportion.

We witness the infinite power of the Almighty's art in everything, from the sun to the ant." (İman Hakikatleri Etrafında Suallere Cevaplar, p. 8)

Ismail Fenni adds:

"Upon seeing any given masterpiece of creation, we cannot help but exclaim 'how perfect!' Then based on His infinite power and wisdom, what stops us from referring to their artist as 'The Most Perfect Being?

I personally believe that those unable to acknowledge the Almighty's glory, are dimwits afflicted with the disease of doubt and mentally paralysed in the muddled backstreets of philosophy!" (Maddiyyun Mezhebi'nin İzmihlali, p. 28)

Ismail Fenni goes on to pose logical questions to those who reduce the existence of the universe to coincidence:

"Millions of systems are needed for just a single wing of a fly to come into existence. This is just one instance of countless organisms in the ecosystem that complement each other. If we go by a coincidental view of nature, however, by the time these organisms came into being, there would have to have been an incomparably greater number of imperfect and flawed organisms. Why, then, are we unable to come across them today?"

If these became extinct, why are we unable to find their trace? Why does nature not produce ungainly animals but always brings into existence animals that are perfectly proportionate?" (Maddiyyun Mezhebi'nin İzmihlali, p. 54)

"...Upon discerning an arrangement and mathematical calculation in any given object, the mind necessarily infers that it must be the work of a higher being that arranges and calculates..."

Assume, for instance, you have a vineyard. You carefully had trees planted in rows around its edges. One morning you went there to find out that a few of the trees, randomly here and there, had fallen on their sides. You ask the gardener about what happened, and he tells you about a storm that broke out the previous night. You would accept this explanation.

You then went there another day, this time to see that the trees had fallen in a pattern; for example, every fifth tree was down, while the previous four were still standing. And you observe this pattern all around the vineyard. Would you be satisfied, if the gardener was to, once again, blame it on a storm? You would undoubtedly mistrust it and instead look for a culprit with bad motives. It is clear that while the previous case could be explained by coincidence, this cannot. For this time, a mathematical calculation has entered the picture." (İman Hakikatleri Etrafında Suallere Cevaplar, p. 21-22)

Now, as for those who believe everything in the universe boils down to coincidence:

- How can they be sure that the level of oxygen in the air will not accidentally become unstable by the time they wake up tomorrow?
- Why do they not fear the possibility that the delicate balance that brings one season after another will not tip, and produce a boiling heat that will scorch mankind or a blistering cold that will bring a great freeze?

- How can they be certain that the order in their hearts, kidneys, livers and the rest of their body, over which they have no command or power to intervene, will continue to function as perfectly the next day?

Or do these chains of coincidence always work in their favour?

Can they really believe that there exists no supreme power that commands and regulates this undeniable order in the universe?

If they really did, they would go insane.

How would a passenger on an aeroplane react, if he suddenly heard that all the pilots had passed out or died? The fear would perhaps make him go mad, right there and then. Would he be able to calm down by somehow believing that the plane will still safely land thanks to a consecutive chain of perfect coincidences?

No atheist or deist fears whether he will have enough oxygen to inhale tomorrow. None of them carry an oxygen bottle. This means they have implicit trust in a divine power and despite accepting the Almighty's power in their hearts and minds they still wander about in a maze of ignorance.

Alas!

Atheism, denial and disbelief are only an escape. An escape from the responsibility of servanthood, camouflaged in a host of excuses.

Deism is to accept the truth half-heartedly; and this acceptance defies not only reason, it also reduces the heart to rubble. A belief of this kind has no benefit in the afterlife.

It has already been stated that to deny the Absolute Creator, one must be stupid.

A deist, supposedly, does not deny the Creator; but rejects his authority as the Lord. He rejects religion, prophets and the commandments of the Creator.

In the face of the infinitely splendid wisdom engraved in the universe, trying to somehow turn the denial of the Prophet (SAW), the Qur'an and the afterlife into a reasonable opinion, is, in reality, to reject reason and cognition altogether. This type of denial, which they call deism, is simply piteous.

Atheism is;

- To see the causes but not the Cause of all causes;

- To see the work but ignore the Maker;
- And to see the art but deny the Artist.

Deism, on the other hand, is to argue that all these causes are pointless and without purpose. And insofar as denial is concerned, this is no better than atheism.

The devil resorts to the trick of renaming a sin and giving it a make-over to make it acceptable.

For example, he rebrands adultery as flirting, usury as interest and gambling as a game, to try to swindle us into viewing them as acceptable. Just because it is called deism or any other name, it doesn't change the fact that it is disbelief.

May the Almighty Allah fill all our hearts with faith and certainty. May He cleanse them of the grime of doubt and may He allow us to achieve peace and fulfilment.

Amin!





QUESTIONS IN THE VORTEX OF DOUBT



We hear people say inane and delusional words like,
“Did Allah ask me before creating me?”

Allah the Almighty says
“You were nothing, and I created you.”

What does a ‘nothing’ mean in the face of an ‘Eternal Power’?

And how logical is it for a High and Flawless Power to ask
the opinion of an entirely flawed being who is a nothing?

What can the One possibly ask a hollow nothing?

QUESTIONS IN THE VORTEX OF DOUBT

An academic research suggests that a number of questions circulate on the internet and the media about deism and atheism.³ Some of these are inquiries that can baffle minds seduced by doubt, but which have nonetheless already been long resolved by Muslim theologians centuries ago. Others, however, are just naive and, in a sense, absurd. They are drivels that do not even merit a serious response.

A Muslim heart irks at the need to recap such things, even if it be for the purpose of refuting them.

Nevertheless;

It remains a vital duty to offer healing explanations that could dispel the doubt inside confused minds, and revitalise their energy to contemplate.

Besides conveying this information personally, in this day and age, it has also become important to deliver it via books, magazines or in audio and visual formats. These have now become means for a Muslim to fulfil his duty to enjoin the good.

This is an age in which ignorance is not only formidably strong, but also when false and deviant ideas are indiscriminately being propagated in every part of the world.

So, let us now answer a few of those questions.

A bulk of them surround the issue of fate.

Fate is a matter that transcends human cognition, and to which man must therefore submit. Those who cannot submit, end up getting bogged down in the mud of either rejecting fate or rejecting human will. Worse still, they proceed to commit the grave error of denouncing Allah the Almighty in His possessing of infinite knowledge and power.

3. Associate Professor Fatma Günaydın, İmam Hatip Liselerinde İnanç Soru(n)ları, Din Karşıtı Çağdaş Akımlar ve Deizm Sempozyumu, Van, 2017, p. 321.

- Allah the Almighty has infinite knowledge and power. He is Most High and exalted above human attributes. Thus, while we have no way of knowing the future, nothing is concealed from the Almighty's knowledge and naturally, He also knows the final outcome of each and every person.

- Allah the Almighty is testing His servants and according to the result they obtain, He will steer them on the Day of Judgment either to heaven or hell.

People incapable of reconciling these two facts in their minds, fall into the error of judging the Creator as though He is a human being; and pose one-sided and illogical questions grounded on weak interpretations. They become strangely obsessed with metaphysical issues that are way beyond their grasp. This is due to a desire to lead a careless life that allows them to dive deep into sensual pleasures and avoid personal responsibilities, when it is these that directly affect them and determine their ultimate destiny.

They say, for example:

"If Allah knows we will end up in either heaven or hell, then why does He test us?"

Or;

"Why did Allah create us, if He already knows everything?"

They do not care to think that;

Schools that they highly regard put students through years and years of exams all in the name of education and for the sake of a piece of paper called a diploma. Schools do this because they know from beforehand that the lazy students will fail and when graduates are interviewed for jobs, the first thing they are asked about is their diplomas given to them only on the basis of their exams. If they are found wanting, they are shown the door.

Now;

Whether it be for this or that, man follows this blueprint in every stage of his life, where he is constantly tested. For him to accept this as a necessary part of life but not accept his Lord's grand exam whose diploma will decide on where he ends up is simply childish and self-defeating.

Man, himself, promotes or demotes aspiring applicants in line with an education system that is based on exams. So, with what kind of flawed logic can he blame the Almighty for the doing the same?

If destiny was determined not by a trial but randomly; that is to say, if man was to suddenly find himself in hell for nothing, would he not then ask:

“Why did Allah not at least put me through a test?”

He certainly would; and the words;

“Through His eternal knowledge, Allah knows I will end up in hell, and therefore, He need not even test me” would not even cross his mind.

This is the answer as to “why there is a trial even though Allah knows the outcome”. In this grand trial, Allah the Almighty has assigned man with irrefutable witnesses. Angels bear witness and keep a logbook of his deeds. Even the hands, feet and other limbs will be summoned as witnesses. Places will give testimony. On top of all this, man’s own conscience will be an informant at the divine court.

Allah the Almighty cannot be compared with any other being. Nonetheless, the following analogy may present greater clarity:

An experienced teacher warns one of his students:

“If you do not study, you will fail the year level!” Before long, the exams conclude and the student really does end up failing. What is the reason for his failure? Is it because the teacher knew he would fail if he did not study or that he somehow knew he would not study and end up failing? Of course, it is not.

Essentially, these allude to another set of questions, namely:

“Why does Allah test us?”, and;

“Why does Allah punish those who deny Him and fail to fulfil His commands?” And here, we must be aware of our limits.

As;

Allah the Almighty is “the Absolute Doer”, the sole power who does whatever He wills. He is “the Owner of Sovereignty”; the entire universe is His dominion, on which He is “Absolutely Free” to do whatever He wills. No one has the power to overstep the line or question Him.

And our Lord has wished to test us. Heaven does not come for free. Neither is hell futile.

The Almighty has displayed compassion across the entire universe.

- He has made man capable of passing this test. He has given him reason and understanding and from this test, He has exempted children and the mentally ill.

- He has created everything in the cosmos as material with which to contemplate. If man is competent enough to put his God-given mind and heart to the best possible use, he will find that contemplation will offer him a key to expand his faith.

- To guide the human mind, Allah the Almighty has moreover sent divine books and prophets. These prophets have trained saints, who have assumed the task of promoting the good and prohibiting evil until the final hour.

The Qur'an states:

"We sent messengers to bring good news and to warn, so that mankind will have no excuses against Allah. And Allah is the Mighty and Wise." (Al-Nisa, 4: 165)

- The Almighty has granted lifespans that offer plenty of time to accept and comprehend the truth. He informs us that those who wail in the hereafter for failing the test of life, will hear a voice asking them:

"Did We not grant you a lifelong enough for a wise man to remember? Besides, prophets had also come to you!

So, taste the punishment!

For the wrongdoers, have no helpers!" (Al-Fatir, 35: 37)

- The Almighty does not destroy a person the moment he falls into denial or commits a sin. He gives him time until the final breath to repent and improve.

- The Almighty offers many means and opportunities to repent, punishes sins only in kind but rewards good deeds at least tenfold.

Despite all this, blaming Allah the Almighty for the people that end up in is futile and stupid.

Scholar Elmalılı Hamdi Efendi writes:

"Allah's punishment is pure justice, while His mercy is pure grace." (Elmalılı, Hak Dini, II, 992)

In other words, if our Lord chooses to penalise, it is not an injustice. It is justice in the truest sense of the term. And if He forgives and rewards a servant with paradise, it is not because the servant deserves it. It is entirely a gift.

Justice pertains only to whether one is able to pay his dues for the blessings received. Justice is irrelevant when it comes to grace. It is part of Allah's grace that He brought us into being. It is not because we deserved to exist. The Almighty has the right offer a favour or withhold it; some may receive more, others less. But, especially on this matter, no one has the right to question Him.

As for man, he is liable to answer for his actions, for he is given blessings that come with a duty and responsibility.

Despite paying no fees, we have been created out of nothing, purely from the grace of Allah (JJ). Among entire creation, we have been made part of our Prophet's (SAW) community. Although we did not pay a price to obtain any of these gifts, we will pay their dues to make a safe passage into the eternal realm.

Simpler put, we will be taken to our Lord's presence, after having completed our lives on earth with our debts of gratitude repaid. There, we will read the logbooks of our deeds, the exam results of our trial on earth. We will watch the videos of our lives and once our book of deeds are laid out in front of us with a record of our every single action from the smallest to the biggest, we will beg the Almighty not for 'justice' but 'mercy'.

Our righteous deeds in life will mean absolutely nothing compared our Lord's favours.

Our Prophet (SAW) once said:

"No one can be saved by good deeds alone!"

The startled companions asked:

"Not even you, Allah's Messenger?"

The Prophet (SAW) replied:

"Even I can be saved only through Allah's mercy and benevolence." (Muslim, Munafiqin, 76, 78)

What lies at the end of this trial is the magnificent reward of eternal paradise, and it is only fair if those who fail wind up in an eternal loss, despite all the divine help they had been given.

Although man is a mortal being, he feels free when he exercises his authority over the other creatures on earth, which Allah (JJ) has disposed to man's service.

For example;

- Man benefits from the meat, milk and eggs of animals like sheep, cows, chickens and fish. But never does he ask, "Do I have the right to do this?"
- He discriminates between objects according to whether they are valuable or worthless. He flings the worthless stuff into the bin, while storing away objects of value, and never does he ask, "What right do I have to do this?"
- He makes others work and never asks, "What right do I have to tell them what to do?" He instead says, "Well, I am the one who is paying their wages!"

Then;

Who has the right to object if the Almighty decides to select His rotten and rebellious servants for punishment, when it was He who personally created them, gave them reason and sufficient time, and further reinforced them with prophets and divine books?

Some of the other equally illogical questions are:

"If Allah loves us, then why does he allow us to sin only to punish us in hell?"

"Why does Allah not prevent evil?"

"Why do we worship, if we are already predestined for heaven or hell?"

For goodness sake;

Even in our own systems of education, it is the onus of students to answer the questions in exams. Just because he likes a student, a teacher cannot intervene in his paper. If he is found to have stopped the student from writing the wrong answer and jotted down the answer himself, he is given the sack for partiality and plagiarism.

So, what is a condition of being an honest teacher?

To not intervene during an exam, even if it be for a student he likes. Allowing a student to make mistakes during an exam and then passing or failing him accordingly, has nothing to do with whether or not a teacher loves the student. Much to the contrary, a teacher of this kind is praised for being fair and loyal to his profession. Why cannot the case be the same for Allah (JJ)?

Furthermore;

Only people who have lost their balance of judgment can resort to these kind of fruitless debates and wordplays about the Almighty knowing who will end up in heaven or hell.

That is because;

It is clear that those who believe and worship will go to heaven. This is what the Almighty promises in the Qur'an.

It is also clear that deniers and rebels will wind up in hell. This means that;

The divine decree is;

To send non-believers to hell and believers to heaven.

Saying the contrary is to resort to a wordplay, where;

The Almighty's judgment is inverted and misrepresented. In other words, the cause and the effect are reversed. Yet, the truth of the matter is far from it. The Lord judges the outcome. It is, therefore, wrong to ask, "Why would a person already destined for hellfire commit to good action for nothing?" There is no such thing.

The truth is that;

There is a period of trial that lasts until the final breath; and during this period, a life filled with faith, pious deeds and submission to the Lord and His mercy, will not be recompensed with hell.

There is not a single passage in the Qur'an, where the Allah warns such a lifestyle as being hell-bound.

Then, who is making all this up?

Ignorant and heedless people, entirely unaware that such a person ending up in hell is as impossible as a camel squeezing its way through the eye of a needle.

And this shows that inverting a correct formula to the point where it is no longer feasible, is not done with a genuine intent to learn but with a malicious intent to corrupt. When the Almighty explicitly says, “Deniers, tyrants and rebels will go to hell”, what these people do is swap the order of the wording to imply that the Almighty supposedly destines people for hell right from the beginning, and forces them into good action only as an aftereffect. This idea is too weak for any scale of truth. It is a philosophy developed as an alibi to flee the trial on earth; it is a wilful choice to suffer the worst form punishment.

Allah the Almighty created both good and evil, and while our Lord does not condone evil, He has nonetheless created it as a trial.

It is only because of the conditions of this trial that our Lord allows people to sin.

But for a moment, let us consider the opposite. If the Almighty did not allow any sins to be committed, then there would no longer be a trial. Paradise would be bereft of all meaning.

Recall the schools and universities on earth, whose programmes are built around exams. What would it mean to study hard to become a doctor, if universities were to hand out diplomas to everyone?

Human beings are predisposed to struggle against and compete with one another, and feel the need to deserve, at least, a bit of their success. The Almighty declares:

“Vie with one another in good action.” (Al-Maidah, 5: 48)

And elsewhere:

أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا

“He has created death and life to see which of you is best in action.” (Al-Mulk, 67: 2)

It needs to be understood that;

Employers did not create workers from nothing and brought them into existence. Yet, they fire them merely for not following their orders. They

push the workers to unemployment and even poverty, without feeling the slightest pang of remorse. They think, "Why should I keep feeding someone who does not do what I say?"

Then, is the Almighty compelled to pour blessings down on people who disobey His orders and even deny Him altogether? Certainly not!

Allah (JJ) does what He wills. He only treats His servants with justice, mercy and wisdom. It is for this reason that despite the sheer degree of their rebellion, even disbelievers receive their provisions on earth. The Qur'an states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا
وَلَكِنَّ النَّاسَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

"Allah does not wrong people in any way; rather it is people who wrong themselves." (Yunus, 10: 44)

وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

"Allah did not wrong them; rather it was themselves they were wronging." (Al-i Imran, 3: 117; also see Al-Nahl, 16: 33)

The below questions are of a similar nature to the others mentioned above:

"It was never my choice to come into this world. Allah just tells me that I chose to take this burden at a time I have no recollection of."

Well, then;

Is not this the same manner in which you exercise your will on objects in life?

Say, when you carve a rock and shape it into an artistic masterpiece, does this choice belong to you or the stone?

And this is logical, is it not?

How would it have been if the rock was given the choice?

If you were to apply this flawed logic that use in relation to Allah on the things you shape in life, you would not be able to live.

Do you ever ask the fruit before rapaciously digging your teeth into it?

Again, did you ever ask the opinion of the meat, fish and the food on your table before eating them?

Did you ever consider asking the rocks that you carve, whether they are okay with it?

Also;

Do not those rocks embody your art?

Is a piece of paper or scrap metal equipped with the capacity to display the art you impress upon on a rock?

Undertaking any work depends on the capacity to do it. Otherwise, it would be a mismatch.

For example, you cannot use timber from a poplar tree to serve as the column of a large building. It cannot carry the weight. It will snap and collapse, as it lacks the capacity needed for the task. But you can certainly use timber from a chestnut tree. It can carry the building for centuries. It is designed and built for it; and hence, it becomes the preferred choice for the task.

Such is the case with human beings who have burdened the divine trust. While some have not been created with the capacity to carry it, others have; and therefore, the trust has been placed on their shoulders.

Besides;

Saying "It was not my choice" not only carries an air of pretence, it is also marred with a logical flaw.

- Man cannot be asked for an opinion before he comes into existence.

Plus, as is partly mentioned above:

Every product is necessarily the choice, not of itself, but of its maker. Man manufactures cars; yet, this is not the choice of the cars. Not only does no one object to the making of the car, they acclaim the end result and look to make use of it.

Again;

Man makes a sofa or an armchair and proceeds to use it for his comfort. This is never the choice of the material; it is simply the outcome of its maker's expertise.

When all is said and done;

If man consistently applied this objection he levels against the Almighty to his own daily affairs, he would never have been able to devise a single tool or construct a sole building and life would become paralysed.

No material makes the choice to become a pair of shoes, a house, a car or a building. These are all choices made by man.

In this trial of life, there were only two choices:

Either to remain nothing or to exist on the condition of a trial.

And now, there is no escape from this trial.

To desire for a life without a trial, is simply a pipedream.

Besides, existing is a great blessing. The arrogance of responding to a blessing of such magnitude with the words, "But I was never given the choice", is no different to this:

Rescuers evacuating the scene of a blazing fire stumble upon a man asleep. They wake him up, only to have the man turn around and retort rather ungratefully:

"Did you ask me if I wanted to be woken up?"

If they did ask him, he would have already been awake to answer. Plus, who would want to perish in a fire? Who would prefer nothingness over existence?

Another deceptive fantasy is to seek consolation in empty wishes and dreams. Once they reach the end of the road, the Qur'an tells us that people of this kind will, once again, fall back on empty hopes, as they did in life, pleading with words like:

"If only we redid this trial, if only we turned to dust or died, perished and forgotten..."

When there is the incomparably better option to live up to the God-given honour of a human being, strive to become jewels in the crown of existence and, at the end, reach the endless pleasures of paradise, trying to seek refuge in hollow wishes is nothing more than a hopeless escape.

Allah the Almighty has created us as 'humans', the most honourable of all creation, made us supreme and breathed into us His own spirit. And as

stated in the Qur'an, He assigned humans as His successors (*Khulafa*) upon the earth:

"It is He who appointed you successors on the earth and raised some of you above others in rank..." (Al-Anam, 6: 165)

Sheikh Galib puts it wonderfully:

Know your value since you are the essence of the cosmos

You are a human being, the pupil of the eye of the worlds

"Look at yourself with the eye of your heart. You will find you are the essence of all creatures and the apple of the eye of the universe, a human being."

Now, we must ask:

Did man pay any price to come into this world as a human being? Or due to which of his virtues did the Almighty decide to give him that coveted status?

A person who goes around saying, "It was not my choice to be a human", should answer:

Would you change it if you had the chance?

If you had the opportunity to swap your existence, your mind, soul and human dignity with a worm or a rat, would you go ahead and do it?

So, as it now turns out, is it your choice or not?

Consider a situation where, out of the blue, a person was gifted an abundant treasure more than enough to cover all his needs. Would he ever turn to the benefactor and whine:

"How could you gift this to me? Did you ever ask for my permission?" He would have to be insane. Any sane human being would respond only with the deepest emotions of love, appreciation and gratitude; and feel forever indebted to the person who provided him such an immense gift.

When we feel morally indebted even to a person who offers us a glass of water in this fleeting life, how ugly is it to voice these words of discontent to the Creator who has granted us innumerable gifts, especially the great blessing to have been created as human beings?

Man does not come into this world by working for it or paying a fee. On the contrary, he was created from nothing and sent into this world with "zero capital". Everything he owns is purely from divine grace.

The Almighty could have just as well created him as a slithering snake and he could not have objected to it, whatsoever. Apart from humans and the jinn, no species are subject to a trial; and are, therefore, not given the power to protest against the Almighty's commands.

The creation of animals is not in vain either. A law and order governs them all. They are manifestation of the Almighty's names "The Designer" (*Al-Bari*) and "The Fashioner" (*Al-Musawwir*). Each species has been created without an archetypical model, and each displays qualities unique to itself. Each is happy in the habitat of its own kind.

It is yet another manifestation of the Almighty's power that He has made each animal like its own species. They are happy as they are; and the example below illustrates that wonderfully:

"Son of man! Since the day the universe was created, no bird has tried to make more nests than its neighbour. No fox wasted itself thinking 'one den alone is not enough for me!'. No squirrel died of stress because it was unable to hoard walnuts that would last it not one but two winters. And no dog spent the entire night without sleep, worried that it did not save up enough bones to last until old age."

In other words;

All creatures are content with what the Allah has preordained. This is because Allah gave every creature a nature that will make it happy.

For instance, the snake is happy within its own community. So are the colourful birds, they are entirely at peace in their own lives. In fact, as Rumi (QS) says:

"Even the termite inside the wood boasts, 'Who enjoys tastier sweets than I?'" Their only grief is caused by man, who cuts them off from their natural habitats and locks them up in cages at zoos or turns them into objects of entertainment at circuses. It is among the greatest forms of tyranny for man to imprison birds in cages and fish in tanks.

So, for man to defiantly and resentfully attempt at calling his Lord to account, not only exposes a terrible ignorance of the high qualities he is blessed with, but also shows a grave idiocy and ingratitude. It is simply a paralysis of the mind and cognition.

Also, falling into this kind of error stems from the mistake of assuming that the relation between the Creator and the created is the same as the relation between humans.

It must not be forgotten that;

Allah the Almighty is “the Creator” who brings beings into existence from nothing, whereas man is a created being brought into existence from nothing.

We hear this question at times, posed even more tastelessly, to the effect of:

“Did Allah ask for my opinion before creating me?”

The Almighty declares:

“You were nothing; and I created you.”

What power can this “nothing” hold before “the Eternal Power”? Besides, how logical is it for a flawless and supreme mind to ask for the opinion of a completely flawed nothing?

Plus, what could one possibly ask a void?

Moreover;

Have you, as a human, ever asked the foods you consumed whether they wanted to be eaten? Did you ever receive their confirmation? Who did you ask before chewing on them? Did you ask permission of the animals you milked, slaughtered and skinned to obtain your food and clothes? Did you ever receive their permission? Do you ask the flowers before plucking them out of their stems purely for your pleasure?

Still, the Almighty asks you:

“Do you want heaven or hell?”

And he leaves it up to you to decide. Should your destination be paradise or hellfire? The choice belongs to you. The Almighty sends divine books and asks:

“Do you, o man, want heaven or hell?”

He asks through prophets:

“Do you want heaven or hell?”

He then declares:

“We guided him on the Way, whether he is thankful or unthankful.”
(See, Al-Insan, 76: 3)

You ignore the choice the Almighty has left to you and babble on about how He supposedly never asked your opinion before sending you into the world.

That is astonishing.

So, you have the right of disposal over everything in this world entrusted in your care, but the one who created both them and you, does not have the right?

What arrogance! What ingratitude!

Remember that;

It was your Lord who handed you the privilege of disposal over this earth. The Qur'an states:

“And He has made everything in the heavens and everything on the earth subservient to you. It is all from Him. There are certainly signs in that for people who reflect.” (Al-Jathiyah, 45: 13)

And remember;

Allah (JJ) does not need you. Purely out of His eternal grace and generosity, He only wants to train you and thereby lift your status as a human being; in other words, turn you into a virtuous servant worthy of an infinite stay in paradise. You need to read the below verse, over and over again:

“O man! What has deluded you in respect of your Noble Lord? He who created you and formed you and proportioned and assembled you in whatever way He willed.” (Al-Infitar, 82: 6-8)

All senseless talk comes from deception and lack of wisdom.

If those who utter these silly words were really asked for a choice, would they really have chosen nothingness? Or would they be eager to exist so they could aspire to paradise?

Now, let us pose a question to evoke a bit of thought:

Why should Allah be forced to ask His servant? Theoretically, there is no such necessity.

In that;

People who enter traffic automatically accept the traffic rules. A baby born in any given country automatically becomes bound as a citizen by that country's laws.

Human beings born into this world are irrepressibly bound by the laws of life, to which they necessarily submit. They do not find the right within themselves to interrogate the laws of physics and question "why the fire burns" or "why the cold freezes." They embrace these facts.

Yet, when it comes to the divine trial, which is the spiritual principle of life, they resort to this drivel and seek refuge in this absurd philosophy of ignorance.

It must not be forgotten that;

The more man knows, the more silent he becomes. And the wiser he gets, the more aware he becomes of his nothingness. As for the ignorant, they drown in the darkness of the questions they raise for no other purpose than to hide their transgressions, such as:

"Why does Allah punish people, whose hearts he has sealed, with hell?"

Just think;

Would Allah (JJ) ever seal the heart of a person He personally created, unless the person has it sealed through sin? Would anyone throw into the bin something useful? Before anything, one must look at what the person did to have his heart sealed.

This principle must always be kept in mind:

Allah (JJ) is the possessor of an infinite mercy and wisdom. He does not oppress His servants. Neither does He engage in action without meaning or purpose.

Therefore, if the Almighty has sealed the heart of a servant, there is an underlying wisdom, even if we may not know it.

Nevertheless, in the Qur'an, He has informed us of some of these reasons in verses that contain the term لَا يَهْدِي / Allah does not guide (people with these traits).

Accordingly, people who persist in sins such as ingratitude, tyranny and lying face the risk of having their hearts sealed.⁴

4. See, Al-Baqarah, 258, 264; Al-i Imran, 86; Al-Maide, 51, 67; Al-Anam, 144; Al-Tawbah, 19, 24, 37, 80, 109; Al-Nahl, 107; Al-Qasas, 50; Al-Zumar, 3; Al-Mumin, 28, Al-Ahqaf, 10; Al-Saff, 5, 7; Al-Jumah, 5; Al-Munafiqun, 6.

Plus, the Almighty has told us about the traits he likes and dislikes. The fact that people who insist in the traits the Almighty dislikes are eventually deprived of guidance, should therefore come as no surprise or, for that matter, considered tyranny.

It is clear that the questions cited until now all try to probe the wisdom behind human trial, which is our reason of existence. They try to find in it a logical flaw. But the truth is plain to see. There is no point meandering off the beaten track. Just because man can come up with excuses, does not mean he will be exempted from trial.

The Qur'an states:

"See how they lie against themselves and how what they invented has forsaken them!" (Al-Anam, 6: 24)

Some, on the other hand, become lost in the futile thought of:

"Why do we die if we are going to be resurrected?"

DEATH, THE GATEWAY TO THE AFTERLIFE

When, in fact;

In the trial of man, death offers a double meaning.

People who deny Allah (JJ) and the afterlife suppose death to be an end. So, here, the existence of death serves as a curtain for the realm beyond. In the past, those who rejected resurrection, crushed decayed bones in their hands and scornfully asked:

"Who will possibly bring this back to life"

But somehow, they never considered that:

"He who made them in the first place will bring them back to life!" (See, Ya-Sin, 36: 78-79)

Believers, however, are fully aware that death is a gateway to the true life that awaits in the hereafter. The thought of death stops them from falling into the deceitful traps of the world. They consider this world as a station on a journey. They do not idle around.

As death is a proclamation of mortality, it is also a blessing just like life. The Qur'an states:

“He has created death and life to see which of you is best in action.”
(Al-Mulk, 67: 2)

Rumi (QS) says:

“Son! Death assumes the person’s colour. To those who hate death and act as its enemies without thinking it is the reunion with the Lord, death appears as a nemesis. For those who befriend death, it appears as a friend.”

“You who fear death and run away from it! If you want to hear the truth of the matter, you do not fear death; you fear your own sins and neglect.”

“What you fear when you stare at the mirror of death, is not the face of death but your own vile face. If your soul is a tree, death is a leaf. Know that each leaf forms according to the species of the tree...”

If death was not part of this trial and if each baby born into this world was to live until the day of judgment, then the trial would have been a lot heavier. Yet, ageing, losing energy and vigour near old age and ultimately signs that indicate the fleeting nature of the world and the true life that awaits in the hereafter.

Of course, this is only for those who can understand it.

The Qur’an says:

“When We grant long life to people, We return them to their primal state. So will you not use your intellect?” (Ya-Sin, 36: 68)

Death exists for man to realise his weakness. In the Qur’an, the Almighty speaks to those standing by the deathbed of a person moments away from bidding farewell:

“Why then, when death reaches his throat, and you are at that moment looking on - and We are nearer to him than you but you cannot see - why then, if you are not subject to Our command, do you not send it back if you are telling the truth?” (Al-Waqiah, 56: 83-87)

Death exists for man to truly comprehend that the eternal life that begins with resurrection, is spun into motion solely by the will of Allah (JJ). If death was not there as an interval, people would think, “We are eternal creatures, anyway.” And they would have virtually plundered one another with greed and ambition.

Man must think;

Why are we born into this world and to where do we ultimately go when we leave?

- On whose property do we live?
- With whose food are we fed?
- And to where does existence flow?

Thinking about this leads man to the realisation that this universe is a school upon which the trial of life is staged.

EQUALITY AND JUSTICE ARE NOT THE SAME

Question: Do we believe in Allah simply for having been born into a Muslim family. What is the crime of those born into families that are non-Muslim?

Question: Why does Allah give trouble to one person but comfort to another? Why does not our Lord treat everyone equally?

As these two questions relate to the mystery of destiny, let us answer both of them together.

People often confuse equality with justice. Yet, equality does not always amount to justice.

Talking about equality, it is safe to say that the Almighty has allotted the blessings of reason and cognition mentioned above, to all people more or less equally.

We could talk about injustice, if people of unequal conditions were to be judged in the same light.

Yet, the Almighty's judgment is unique to each individual, and to dispel what doubts people may have, the Almighty has stated:

"Allah does not impose on any self more than it can stand." (Al-Baqarah, 2: 286)

Each person is trialled according to his own conditions.

Furthermore, the Allah has turned all difficulties and obstacles into means of collecting greater rewards.

For instance, if they remain patient, the visually impaired will be grateful for being sightless on earth, once they see the rewards awaiting them in the afterlife.

The Almighty Allah never wrongs His servants. The Qur'an declares:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ

“Allah does not wrong anyone by so much as the smallest speck.” (Al-Nisa, 4: 40)

Faith also requires belief in these principles. A believer does not doubt Allah's (JJ) mercy. He cannot even think of the Almighty doing him injustice.

Some people abuse the principle of the mercy of Allah and say:

“Every person follows the religion of his parents or society. Therefore, there cannot be one true religion. Faith is relative. What is right for one might not be right for another...”

This is certainly incorrect. Islam began in a region which, for centuries, had not received divine revelation. The people there obstinately proclaimed, “We will not abandon the religion of our forefathers!” Our Prophet (SAW) struggled against this bigotry.

The inner trial of each man takes place on a personal level. Many people who spent their childhood in mosques, sadly end up diving deep into sin or losing their faith, while many others born far and distant from Islam grow up to embrace it.

Faith's destiny is a divine mystery.

Faith was not part of Abu Talib's share, even though he protected the Prophet (SAW) under his wings for years; whereas Hind, who had Hamza (RA) killed and his corpse mutilated, ended up becoming Muslim. We may never know what the underlying wisdom is, as our grasp, as human beings, is limited.

As recounted in the Qur'an, during their brief journey, Moses (AS) took exception to three of Khidr's(AS) actions, as he could not make sense of them through reason. But when Khidr (AS) ultimately explained the underlying wisdom in each, Moses (AS) was entirely at peace.

While we do not know the inner reason behind Abu Talib's reluctance to believe, he did cite the below reason to the Prophet (SAW)

“Nephew, if I do believe in what you say, then the women of Quraysh will ridicule me...” (See, Wahidi, *Asbabu Nuzuli'l-Qur'an*, p. 268 [Al-Tawbah, 113])

So, the prospect of being chastised by the women of Quraysh proved too big a worry for him to believe in Allah's Messenger (SAW).

From another perspective;

Even if a person has not heard the voice of a prophet or received any message of invitation to the divine call, Muslim theologians still consider it necessary for him to believe in the oneness and existence of Allah (JJ), just by looking at the countless indications in nature.

It should also be remembered that;

Both the Almighty's mercy and wrath could transpire through the slightest of deeds. Trying to understand the wisdom behind this, transcends our capacities.

Another question that casts doubt is:

Question: "The notion of infinity is mind boggling. I just cannot understand how Allah could be infinite."

Man is finite. An ant would not be able to understand the mind of man, either.

HOW COULD THE OCEAN FIT IN A CUP?

Let alone understanding infinity, we are powerless to even truly understand this created universe. We do not even possess the proper words to express the number of macro-universes. We simply make do with saying quadrillion times quadrillion, so forth.

When facing the micro-universe, our minds go blank and our cognition exhausted.

We cannot deny the existence of something just because we cannot grasp it. Many minds do not understand the many vast fields of mathematics. Those fields do not cease to exist just because they cannot understand them. We are weak. So, let us at least understand our nothingness before the Almighty.

Another thing;

As Islam is universal and suitable for all minds, bright or dim, it has not burdened the human understanding with deep theoretical tasks it cannot fulfil. If we submit to the Divine Will, our duties of faith and worship come easy and naturally to every single person. Besides, the Almighty pro-

hibits us from trying to reflect on His Essence; and there are words from the Prophet (SAW) that discourage us from doing so. One of them states:

“Reflect on beings Allah has created, do not reflect on Allah’s essence, for you will never be able to properly grasp and appreciate it...” (Daylami, *Musnad*, II, 56; Haythami, *Majmau’z-Zawaid*, I, 81)

We contemplate the attributes of our Lord and His infinite power and majesty that flows throughout the cosmos; and this serves as a key to faith.

Is it possible to pour the entire ocean into a single cup? The water will begin to spill out, the moment the cup fills. Likewise, a primary school student cannot be expected to understand university textbooks.

It is even more impossible for a person to try and grasp Allah (JJ). A limited being cannot properly understand a being that is limitless.

The Qur’an states:

“If all the trees upon the earth were pens and all the sea, with seven more besides, were ink, Allah’s words would still not run dry. Allah is Almighty and All-Wise.” (Luqman, 31: 27)

Question: “If the time of our death is predetermined in our destiny, then how does giving charity extend our lifespans?”

Destiny is the sum of events the Almighty has decreed to take place in this school of life. Insofar as we cannot grasp the Almighty, we cannot appraise the nature of His knowledge with time-bound notions such as ‘before’ or ‘after’.

For instance, our destiny is set, yet we still worship. Our destiny is determined but we still pray and give donations. It is because we do not know what our destiny is.

If we pray and donate, the Almighty also knows this through His eternal knowledge; and this means that our praying and donating is written in our destiny.

Somehow, if the Almighty did not know of our destiny or individual decisions, deeds and conduct, this would have been a flaw on His behalf, which is utterly unthinkable, as He is free of all flaws. Not knowing the unseen or the future is only a characteristic of human beings.

Debating about destiny does no good. Across history, many rationalists disputing over the matter have ended up either denying destiny or rejecting human will. Both are far from the truth.

Let us worry about the things we will have to answer for. On the day of judgment, we will not be asked:

“Did you solve the riddle of destiny?” Instead, we will be asked:

“Where did you spend your life?”

“What did you do with your knowledge?”

“Where did you earn your money and how did you spend it?”

“Where did you wear out your body?”

Question: “Why does Allah test us when He does not need to?”

Allah needs nothing. Need is relevant only for weak beings.

To exist, we need Allah (JJ) to create us and he did.

We needed life, reason and health and He gave them.

Now, we are not content with just a mortal life. We want to live happily ever after, which amounts to paradise and He has shown us the way and sent us many guides.

Is it not proper to turn around and ask, “Why is He testing us?”

We should, instead, be thankful. The Almighty gave us all those blessings for free.

He says, “Just fulfil the easy task of servanthood during your mortal stay on earth, so I can reward you with eternal paradise.”

And some have the nerve to say:

“Then why do you not give it for free?” It makes no sense at all.

Question: “I wish to be with someone in paradise, but that person wants to be with someone else. What is going to happen?”

Of course, while all our wishes will be fulfilled in paradise, they will be in line with the wishes of others. But if we truly attain to our Lord’s pleasure, He can easily align the heart of another with ours. Or if the other does not deserve this, He can well erase the feelings we have for that person, from our hearts.

Still, these thoughts are trivial compared to the dread of the day we are resurrected.

The Qur'an bears the good news that a person in paradise will be in the company of his or her righteous spouses, children and parents. (See, Al-Rad, 13: 23; Al-Mumin, 40: 8)

The Qur'an explains the scenes of Judgment Day as follows:

As people are gathered on the plain of resurrection, the true servants of Allah (JJ) destined for paradise will be greeted with the welcoming words:

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِنْ رَبِّ رَحِيمٍ

"Peace: a word from a Merciful Lord." (Ya-Sin, 36: 58)

But even the closest people to them who lived in a state of rebellion against the Lord, will be told:

وَامْتَارُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ

"Keep yourselves apart today, you evildoers!" (Ya-Sin, 36: 59)

This will be the saddest and most moving separation. To avoid it, we need to not only protect ourselves from the fire, but also our families and loved ones. For this reason, one of our most important duties is to embody the example for our children of a real Islamic character.

Another question caused by a lack of knowledge of religion, is:

Question: "We criticise pagans, yet we ourselves circumambulate the Kaaba."

The Kaaba is only a point of reference.

THE KAABA, A POINT OF DIRECTION

Our Lord has set a number of places as points of reference. The Kaaba, the Black Stone, the hills of Safa and Marwa, the areas of Arafat and Muzdalifah where pilgrims stand and our first qibla Al-Aqsa, to which the Prophet (SAW) made his famous Night Journey began, are all sacred places the Almighty has determined as *shiar* or reference points.

Respecting these places is a duty and a sign of piety.

As for the sacred things fabricated by human beings, these are all to be rejected. Just as the Almighty alone has the power to implement religious principles, the authority to determine directions for and rites of prayer also belong to Him alone.

The Almighty commanded the angels to:

“Prostrate to Adam!” The angels complied, while the devil disobeyed.

The act of prostration to Adam (AS) was certainly not an act of worship. Adam (AS) simply served as a reference point for a prostration that was directed at the Almighty.

The Kaaba too is the point of reference for worshipping Allah. The *qibla* disperses disorder and unites Muslims in a single direction.

And how wonderful a sight of unity it is to see the congregation of people offering prayer in the inner courtyard of the Kaaba!

Everything in our religion is based on the foundations of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. These are called *adilla-i shariyya*, or the proofs of Islamic law. No jurist can resort to an analogy (*qiyas*), when it comes to the question of rites of worship decreed by Allah (JJ). For that reason, the Kaaba bears no resemblance to idols. It was constructed under the Almighty's command by Abraham (AS).

The following incident will help offer a better understanding:

Umar (RA) once approached the Black Stone, kissed it and said:

“I very well know that you are a piece of stone that has no power to give benefit or harm. But I kiss you, only because I saw Allah's Messenger (SAW) do the same.”

A principle of Islamic law says that if the Kaaba was hypothetically re-located elsewhere, then the building removed from that spot will cease being sacred. For sacredness belongs to that particular spot not in the bricks and mortar. It has, in fact, been rebuilt and renovated many times throughout history.

Question: “What if Christians or atheists are right?”

There is no possibility. Everything is plain to see. In previous pages, we have already explained how, during the course of history, Christianity evolved into a manmade religion. We have also described how blind and

illogical atheism is. Suggesting ‘what if they are right?’ in spite of all this, is redundant.

But let us recap one incident:

A man who rejected life after death once said to Ali (RA):

“You are exhausting yourselves for nothing. What if heaven and hell do not exist?”

Ali (RA) replied:

“If what you say is true, I have nothing to lose as we will all be dust.

But what if you are wrong, and heaven and hell really exist? Have you any idea where you will end up?”

Religion must encompass all aspects of life. It must answer every single question man can raise. In this regard, all manmade religions are insufficient. They have only touched on certain aspects of life; and even there, they have misfired.

A religion that can answer every question can come only from Allah (JJ). And this religion is Islam. As the Qur’an states:

“The religion with Allah, is Islam.” (Al-i Imran, 3: 19)

COULD THE LAWS OF PHYSICS CONSTRAIN THEIR CREATOR?

Question: “During classes of Islamic theology, we hear about miracles; yet, none have any proofs. They are just explained to us. And as far as I am concerned, they lack evidence.”

Let us remind the people who raise this objection that even some of those who witnessed the miracles with their own two eyes, remained in denial. They turned back, calling the miracles “magic” or an “illusion” and accusing the prophets of “hoodwinking” them.

Doubters find it hard to accept miracles only because they consider the natural laws that operate across the universe as absolute and binding.

Yet it is the Almighty who put those laws in place and laws implemented by the Him do not bind Him.

Man must also realise that he has not been able to grasp those laws entirely. He is oblivious to the exceptions to the rule.

A man, for instance, who has never before seen a magnet, will reject the idea that a stone-like object could pull certain metals. But once he sees it, he is no longer baffled, and if the Almighty has higher laws about which we know nothing, then we cannot understand the nature of miracles.

Today, people watch science-fiction films that portray windows opening up to unknown dimensions, people and objects teleported to far destinations, as well as time travel, without finding it difficult to accept their possibility. They think, "While we do not yet possess the technology, this depicts a more advanced future in which these things may well be possible."

So, why does not the same person accept that Allah, the Creator of all things, has the power to achieve any feat and to instantly create the means for anything He wills?

Previously, mankind knew nothing of the "alpha, beta and gamma" rays. Today, it does. Allah says that the knowledge given to man is little. (See, Al-Isra, 17: 85) With the meagre knowledge he has, man has made these discoveries after of thousands of years of.

You believe in the technology mankind has reached at the end of a long crawl, but you deny the eternal power of the Allah?

Some scholars even suggest that miracles offer a horizon for man's scientific and technical discoveries.

In fact;

As a miracle of Abraham's (AS) clothes not burning, despite him being thrown into the fire. Today, humanity has designed fire-resistant clothes and paint.

Jesus (AS) miraculously revived the dead, cured previously untreatable diseases and people who were blind from birth. Today's field of medicine now makes use of defibrillators to restart hearts that have stopped, as well as many other methods of treatment previously unknown.

Solomon (AS) rode the winds to cover a month's journey in a single day, and now, people can travel to remote corners of the world thanks to the development of aviation technology.

While man can slowly, and over the course of centuries, amass knowledge to expand his expertise and ability to do things he previously could not, why should anyone be startled by the absolute power of the Almighty to show miracles?

Question: "Why did Allah allow the previous divine books to be corrupted?"

The Almighty has guaranteed He will protect the Holy Qur'an until the day of judgment.

This is because there will not be another book. Prior to that, prophets and the revelation were periodically renewed.

The reason was that the needs of individuals and societies constantly shifted. While sharing the same creed, each of the 124,000-odd prophets came with laws appropriate to the needs of their societies.

Question: "While alcoholic beverages were banned only gradually in the beginning, why are we under a direct ban on drinking?"

The step-by-step implementation of a particular prohibition, only took place while the Qur'an was still being revealed. In the end, Islam was complete and one can no longer turn back from what is complete.

But the principle of gradualism is still valid in education. For instance, when introducing Islam to a person or society for the first time, one can certainly observe a sequence. Yet, this does not mean ignoring Islamic law. It is simply an easier way to teach Islam using a bit of foresight and prudence.

Right before our Prophet (SAW) sent Muadh (RA) to Yemen, he advised:

"You are going to a people of the book. Invite them to believe in no god apart from Allah and that I am His messenger.

If they obey, then tell them, in no uncertain terms, that Allah has commanded them with five prayers in a single day and night.

If they accept, then explain to them, in no uncertain terms, that Allah has commanded the rich with to give alms to the poor.

And if they accept, avoid taxing their most valuable properties. (that is to say, take alms from their wealth of median value; neither from their most nor least valuable items.)

Beware of attracting the curse of the oppressed, for there is no veil between his curse and Allah." (Bukhari, Zakat, 41, 63, Maghazi, 60, Tawhid, 1)

Once the religion is complete, there is no longer any need for a gradual approach. Still, when calling people to the guidance of Islam, the Almighty

commands us to be “soft-spoken” (*qawlan layyina*). The Qur’an also underlines the importance of explaining the religion using a beautiful tone:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way.” (Al-Nahl, 16: 125)

Question: “I find it odd that Allah constantly says ‘I did it, I created it.’”

Allah is not a helpless human being that His saying ‘I’, should make you unsettled. Our Lord is the Greatest, the most Powerful and the Creator of all things. There is no reason why His saying ‘I’ should upset anyone and the pronouns ‘I’ and ‘We’ used interchangeably throughout the Qur’an, point to His glory in their own separate ways.

Question: “Why is not there an equality between men and women in the Qur’an?”

WOMEN’S HONOUR LIES IN ISLAM

In the sight of Allah (JJ), men and women are on level par. They are entirely equal in terms of their responsibilities of faith and worship. Both are compelled to believe, pray, fast, give alms and offer pilgrimage, as underpinned by the below verses of the Qur’an:

“Anyone, male or female, who does right actions and is a believer will enter the Garden. They will not be wronged by so much as the tinniest speck.” (Al-Nisa, 4: 124; also see, Al-i Imran, 3: 195; Al-Nahl, 16: 97; Al-Mumin, 40)

“Men and Women who are Muslims,

men and women who are believers,

men and women who are obedient,

men and women who are truthful,

men and women who are steadfast,

men and women who are humble,

men and women who give charity,

men and women who fast,

men and women who guard their private parts,

men and women who remember Allah much;

Allah has prepared forgiveness for them and an immense reward.” (Al-Ahzab, 33: 35)

Many religions outside of Islam view women as second-class and as the root of all evil.

In Islam, however, a pious woman is considered one of the greatest blessings in the world. It says that paradise is under the mother’s feet.

Still, men and women are not equal, neither in temperament nor in disposition. Their differences complement one another. Hence, in society, there is a natural division of labour between men and women. As Islam is the natural way for human beings, it has reflects this physical and emotional difference in men and women in their rights and responsibilities.

The Prophet (SAW) said:

“All of you are shepherds and responsible for your flock.

The ruler is a shepherd and responsible for his flock.

A man is the shepherd of his family and responsible for his flock.

A woman is the shepherd of the home and responsible for her flock.

A servant is the shepherd of his master’s property and responsible for his flock.” (Bukhari, Ahkam, 1; Muslim, Imarah, 20)

In contrast, today’s modern world exploits women and forces them to extremes in the name of gender equality.

Women are designed to shoulder the sacred institution of the family by assuming the role of wife and mother. They are, therefore, more emotional than rational. Hence, Islam protects women with wisdoms such as ordering them to cover up and protect their chastity.

In any talk of gender equality, we need to see through the gilded mask of the West and recognise its true face and intention. How could there be any virtue in promoting women to take on work such as driving trucks, becoming butchers and so forth, in an age when interest in marriage has plummeted, divorce rates have skyrocketed and extramarital affairs are condoned; and in a society whose population is dwindling, with the elderly banished from the warm embrace of the family and abandoned to die in desolate homes.

Besides, Islam is not against women taking up work or engaging in various fields of art, culture and knowledge, provided that the environment

in suited. Our mother Aisha (RA) had around 300 students. Many charitable public institutions in the Ottoman era were founded by women.

But a clear conscience would agree that the noblest profession for women is motherhood, the pearl in the family crown. Behind every successful man is always a righteous mother. As much as we credit the victory at Gallipoli to those who shed their lives on the battlefield, it would not have been possible without the mothers sending their sons forth.

In short;

Islam as a way of life encompasses all aspects of life. To give us the happiness of both worlds, it answers every question imaginable, and these answers never carry any contradictions. They are ordered and systematic. Islam is the most perfect of all things perfect. It is two-winged; in that for those who believe, it prepares and provides a bliss both in this life and the next.

Islam's content incorporates a creed, a law, principles of social interaction and order, as well as fine morals.

Islam allows us to understand the reason why the universe and man were created. It regulates the entire life, from the cradle to the grave.

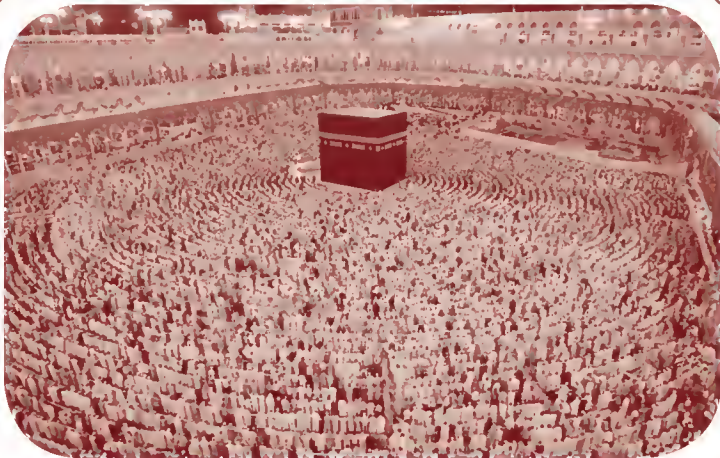
May Allah the Almighty allow us to truly live and breathe Islam!

May He mature our hearts and minds with the guidance of revelation, and protect us from being tricked by the whispers and traps of the ego and the devil. May He harmonise our ideas and emotions with His pleasure.

And out of His grace and benevolence, may He grant His helpless servants like us, His divine pardon, mercy and compassion.

Amin!





THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH AND THE TRUE RELIGION



Islam's content encompasses all aspects of life.

To give the joy of both worlds, it answers every question imaginable, and these answers never carry any contradictions. They are consistent and harmonious. Of all things perfect, Islam is the most perfect.

It is two-winged; in that for those who believe, it prepares and provides a bliss both in this life and the next.

THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH AND THE TRUE RELIGION

The false creed which deists hide behind as an excuse to move away from religion, may be abridged as follows:

False beliefs hold that all religions on earth are products of man. Accordingly, people automatically subscribe to the dominant religions of their countries and never make a conscious choice.

According to false beliefs, religions are part of man's social evolution; and as such, are outdated and should no longer play a part.

False beliefs also argue that all religions promote war and pit societies against one another.

Hence, they insist that all religions should be abandoned in favour of a more 'natural' religion, supposedly grounded in reason and conscience, and loyal to the principles of human morality. And this, is deism.

It was the positivists in recent centuries who first put forth this idea. They believed that while religion was part of man's social evolution, it was now obsolete. Like it or not, it was to be replaced by 'science'.

Based on the idea that religion was the opium that numbed masses, socialism and communism similarly laboured to push religion outside the social sphere. But despite being ostracised and banished for nearly 80 years by the heavy-handed communist regimes of Soviet Russia and China, religions still survived, even the false ones. Religion defied all the pressure and propaganda to remain alive; as the need to believe is an integral part of the human condition.

Being under divine protection, the one true religion Islam has remained strong in the face of all onslaughts.

Hollow arguments that claim religion to be outdated and obsolete, stem from an inability to understand what Islam truly is.

It is unthinkable that their proponents would insist in these claims, if they got to know how perfect Islam is, and learned about its principles that promise the joy of both worlds.

Those who approach Islam with preconceived and prejudiced ideas, should reassess their knowledge of the one and only true religion.

ISLAM AND OTHER RELIGIONS

Religions apart from Islam have deviated from the truth and are either false for being products of man or have been falsified through human intervention.

We have already amply discussed how Christianity suffered an erosion in its creed, rites of worship and law.

Let us now offer another instance:

Isabela, the Queen of Castile, notorious for her atrocities against Muslims in Spain, is also known as 'Dirty Isabela'. This is because according to the absurd outlook of the corrupted Christian religion, washing and bathing meant valuing the world and as an ardent Catholic, Isabela almost never washed; and thus, reeked to the point no one could willingly go near her. It is reported that in her entire life, she only bathed twice.

This belief affected not just the queen but also married women in Spanish society. Many men ended up leaving their fanatically Catholic wives due to their poor hygiene, and turned to prostitutes, as they, at least, occasionally bathed. As a result, prostitution became rampant and the adulterous lifestyle not only ruined families but also dented society for generations to come.

A sad state of a corrupted and, in effect, manmade religion!

Christianity, defiled since the time of Paul, continues to buckle today under the pressure of atheists.

How bizarre it is today that in some countries like the Netherlands, the church performs the marriage rites of two men, when until recently, it was staunchly against the practice. Now, it has made yet another compromise as the church now gives its blessing to a sin and rebellion that pushes a person to the lowest point of society. How can there be a religious approach that sanctions a rebellion with wedlock?

Can there be a religion without character and which constantly crumbles under pressure? Could such a religion make human beings fulfilled? Of course, not.

Judaism is no different. It has also become a toy for distortion. It has become an enemy to humanity and turned tyranny into a religion, just to serve its own race.

As it stands, Judaism is so far removed from the truth that it no longer even allows to invite people to its belief. A religion exclusive to a race!

Superstition has invaded the Jews' oral and written traditions. The remnants of the Torah and Psalms they have are so distorted that they brazenly slander prophets with the absurd claims that they wrestled with God, fell into disbelief and committed adultery.

Also corrupted are the Judaic rites of worship. A prime example is the Kapparot ritual.

Jews, like Christians, have splintered into groups; and one of them, the Ultra-Orthodox Jews, perform this rite as follows:

Before the holy day of Yom Kippur, a Jew first buys a chicken; and reciting a prayer, spins the chicken three times around his head. His sins are, thereby, transferred to the chicken. Afterwards, he slaughters the chicken and in doing so, annihilates all the sin!

Jews themselves admit that this ritual lacks any basis. Before the destruction of the Temple, they used to absolve their sins by transferring them onto a goat and subsequently leaving the goat out in the wilderness. This practice is the origin of the idiom 'scapegoat', used to describe a situation where a person is blamed for the faults of another. But after the Temple was destroyed, they switched the goat to a chicken.

Both corrupted religions tie the atonement of sins to naive practices. In Islam, however, only the Almighty can forgive sins, and there is no way of knowing, in this life, whether a sin has been forgiven. So, a Muslim continues to pray and plead for forgiveness until his very last breath.

Here, let me share an anecdote I personally heard from Necip Fazıl:

The famous sociologist Arnold Toynbee goes to Egypt and due to his interest in social theory, he sneaks up on a lonesome beggar and asks:

"What would you do if I gave you money?"

"I will pray to Allah on your behalf", says the beggar.

"But will Allah accept your prayer?" Toynbee asks once more. The beggar replies:

"Sir, I can only pray. I cannot meddle in the rest. It is for Allah to decide whether He will accept my prayer or decline it."

Toynbee then explains:

"Our priests who we consider educated, claim they atone for the sins of men like them. But here, perhaps the most uneducated member of a religion says:

"It is for God to accept or reject."

Such is Islam's difference from corrupted religions, including the awareness it bestows to Muslims.

Another example:

A churchgoer is asked:

"What should a person do after committing a sin?"

He says, "He should come to the priest, pay some money and confess his sin."

"What if he does it again?"

"He will come to the church again, pay some money and priest will once again forgive him."

"But what if his sin involves major injustices against other people? How will the priest forgive that?"

"....."

Blank, no answer!

What a delusion the rite of confession is.

How can a mortal absolve the sins another mortal has committed against God? How can any victim consent to someone forgiving a severe crime, like burglary or murder, committed against himself for his loved ones? Who would condone the annulment of law?

Flaws and inconsistencies like these leave people disillusioned with falsified religions.

But if only the disillusioned could discover the true religion Islam and see that it is the most perfect religion unblemished by any flaws and inconsistencies, they would rid their minds of bigotry and meet the joy of both worlds.

As for the religions of the Far East, they are far detached from common sense.

- A cast system hostile to human freedom, and coldblooded customs and traditions that put down people.
- A belief in reincarnation, devised as a way of rejecting the afterlife, which does not serve any justice; and whose never-ending continuity defies all logic and reduces the belief to a pointless and absurd migration of souls.
- An aimless mysticism, idol worshipping, paganism and temples in detestable states, awash with filth.
- A confused belief entangled in mythology and folk tales, without either a creator or an afterlife.
- Although they promote practices like vegetarianism, meditation, yoga as well as diets and sports-like physical exercises which partially offer people in the West a residue of mystical pleasure, it is impossible to find happiness in these religions, which lack a god, a direction and purpose.

Apart from these, places like Africa also have a host of false religions, where people are sacrificed while stones are worshipped.

None of these religions prescribe humanity with a cure for happiness. They offer no solutions for the issues that surround individuals, parents, families and societies; as well as economies and the poor.

Even if they were perhaps true centuries ago in their original forms, because of their distortion, they can now only touch upon one or two aspects of life.

So, it is incorrect to pass a general judgment on religion, just by looking at these religions.

The name of the true religion is Islam, and in Islam, these illogical, oppressive and silly practices have no place.

Islam has not come under distortion; and as such, imams have no authority to speak out of whim, determine what people should believe or legislate harams and halals. The authority strictly belongs to Allah (JJ).

Islam derives all its principles from the Holy Qur'an, which is the word of Allah (JJ), and Sunnah, which are the teachings and practices of the Prophet (SAW).

Scholars may decide on unprecedented matters only by conducting an analogy with the rulings of the Qur'an and Sunna with their rulings has to be entirely in the spirit of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

As Islam regulates all aspects of life without opening a door to an egoistic lifestyle, it has come under attack, especially in our current age. It is because of this that certain factions have generated a fear in society against Islam, as denoted by the term Islamophobia. They have invented lies to defame Islam and stand in the way of people approaching it. Yet, Islam quells every human fear and guides its believers on a journey to paradise.

Because other creeds and religions do not come with duties that shape the human being both individually and socially, they currently enjoy a more tolerant outlook.

A person is an enemy of what he does not know. Many people stand against Islam without having properly researched it.

In this regard, let us summarise what Islam is:

Islam's content encompasses all aspects of life. To give the joy of both worlds, it answers every question imaginable, and these answers never carry any contradictions. They are ordered and systematic. Islam is the most perfect of all things perfect. It is two-winged; in that for those who believe, it provides bliss both in this life and the next.

This modern age of ignorance which makes man forget the afterlife, promotes a so-called moderate type of religion, imprisoned inside places of worship and which solely consist of moral teachings.

Our times, therefore, endorse false beliefs such as "deism", which is distant from Divine law and social rules, and "historicism", which looks to indefinitely shelve the law of religion.

The true religion Islam, on the other hand, does not make do with just regulating the times of worship. It uses the most beautiful and ideal measures to organise a person's entire life, private and public, from his household economy and social interaction to what he eats and drinks. It passes judgment on every action.

Religion allows us to understand the reason why the universe and man were created. It organises the entire life, from the cradle to the grave, and each breath we take.

Religion is a sum of laws and principles that prepare man for a peace of conscience in life and eternal happiness in the hereafter.

The Holy Qur'an is the chief source of the real and essential culture. The sciences comprised in the Qur'an can be classified under five headings:

THE CULTURE OF THE QUR'AN

1. The Science of Law

- This teaches the fundamentals of creed and principles of the true faith.
- It informs of the rules pertaining to the rites of worship.
- It establishes the tenets of morality.
- It explains the bad actions, both psychological and social, that drag a person away from Allah (JJ).
- It lists the obligations, both inner and outer, that bring about social order.
- It expresses the principles pertaining to the family.
- It lays down the rules of war.
- It gives peace to the mind by making it resign to the content of revelation, and expands the heart.

2. The Science of Debate

This responds to claims that are incompatible with faith in the oneness of Allah (JJ). It exposes the invalidity of false and corrupted beliefs.

3. Verses about the Universe

These make man reflect on Allah (JJ) by reminding of His blessings. They allow man to behold the Almighty's art both in the self and in the cosmos, and deliver him from the art to the Artist, from the effect to the Cause and the outcome to the Origin.

4. Lessons from the Past

These recount the parables of prophets, noteworthy chapters from the histories of Jews and Christians and the devastation that befell past nations like Sodom and Gomorrah, for human beings to take a lesson.

The Qur'an is also the primary source of knowledge on the life of our Prophet (SAW), our greatest example.

5. News of Death

These inform about death and the stages that follow it. They prepare man for the real life awaiting beyond. To be free of fear and sorrow during that difficult day, they teach the ways of becoming close to the Lord.

All these components just enumerated comprise the culture of the Qur'an. The Qur'an offers the most splendid and magnificent culture. Just as it has enlightened the past and present, Islam offers the only worldview that could guide mankind into the future.

In all phases of life, the sole master and teacher of this culture is our Blessed Prophet (SAW).

The most prolific students of this culture are first and foremost the Prophet's (SAW) companions and then spiritual masters.

Islam is not an ideology. It soars above all ideologies in offering a true and flawless worldview that promises the individual and society the happiness of both worlds.

Each civilisation raises its own type of human being. Ours is a civilisation of the Qur'an and Sunnah. In that respect;

Phases in history when Islam's worldview dominated on all fronts, such as the times of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs, Umar ibn Abdulaziz and the first three centuries of the Ottomans, are golden eras in world history.

It is indisputable that;

The most peaceful people in the world are those who possess a true faith. The Almighty grants a peace of mind to His most devout and righteous servants. Even under the heaviest circumstances, they remain immovably peaceful. They remain at ease, even in the middle of a warzone.

Faith and piety give man such an ecstatic feeling of peace, that a devout man looks at all human beings with compassion and sympathy; and like in the cases of Habib Najjar and Mansur Al-Hallaj, they pray for the forgiveness of even those who pelted them with stones.

For instance, nearly every incident from the Prophet's (SAW) age has been narrated in detail. Yet, we do not observe a single case of a companion afflicted with a psychological illness. Even in the midst of unspeakable troubles, they are always at peace.

Yet, even if basking in the most extreme luxuries, the ignorant and disbelievers are riddled with an maddening lack of peace. This is the reason why they are the ones diagnosed with the highest number of psychiatric illnesses.

The more man embraces Islam, the greater the peace of mind and spirit he acquires, regardless of how heavy his circumstances are. The more he moves away, the quicker he proceeds to the opposite direction, ultimately finding himself in the suffocating grip of psychological issues.

Such is the state of the West...

A widespread discontent and the consequent prevalence of murder, suicide, drugs and homosexuality. And;

The hearts of those who engage in such conduct are naturally peeled of all compassion and their consciences are left dry, to the point they slide into extremes like sadism. Such is the underlying reason behind the never-ending cruelty and bloodshed in places like Palestine, Syria, Yemen and Myanmar.

In both this life and the next;

Peace lies with Islam. It is only to be found in the true religion. It is to believe in Allah (JJ) and to back it up with piety, righteous action and exemplary morals.

Peace lies in believing in the Day of Judgment, when no injustice will be left without punishment.

Peace lies in living up to the reason behind our creation.

EASY AND NATURAL LAW

The religion of Islam, which the Almighty has sent through His final Messenger (SAW), pronounces an especially easier law compared to the past.

We understand from the verse of the Qur'an that:

Due to their sins and rebellious attitudes, the Almighty had obliged Jews with heavier responsibilities. For example;

- They were not allowed to do any work on Saturdays.
- They could not eat some split-hooved livestock like camels.
- They were also banned from consuming the inner fat of livestock such as cows and sheep.

It is also narrated that:

- The ratio of alms was one-fourth.
- They had to offer more daily prayers.
- They were prohibited from taking spoils from war.
- They could only worship in temples.
- Washing alone was not enough to clean dirt; they had to cut out the affected fabric.
- Absolution from certain sins required a person to kill himself.

The Qur'an calls these laws "*isr*" or burdens, and instructs us to pray:

"Our Lord, do not place on us a load like the one You place on those before us..." (Al-Baqarah, 2: 286)

Thanks to this divine mercy, Islamic law is also called:

"A tolerant and easy monotheism" (*al-hanafiyyatu's-samha*)

The Qur'an reveals:

"He has chosen you and has not placed any constraint on you in the Deen – the religion of your forefather Ibrahim." (Al-Hajj, 22: 78)

Islam provides many avenues of convenience during excusable times such as illness or travel:

The passage from the Qur'an that allows the ill or the traveller to compensate for the Ramadan fast at another time, ends with the words:

"Allah desires ease for you; He does not desire difficulty for you." (Al-Baqarah, 2: 185)

And the verse that allows Muslims to use sand or soil for ablution in situations they cannot find water, states:

“Allah does not want to make things difficult for you, but He does want to purify you and complete His blessing on you, so that hopefully you will be thankful.” (Al-Maidah, 5: 6)

RELIGIONS AND WARS

Atheists and deists blame religions for the wars throughout the history of mankind. They portray religions as a harmful set of beliefs that provoke conflict and escalate hostility.

It must be said that;

Being ruthless is part of human nature. In fact, one reason as to why the true religion was revealed, is to save man from his own tyranny and ignorance.

Cane committed the first murder on earth by slaying his brother Abel. The pious Abel said Cane:

“Even if you raise your hand against me to kill me, I will not raise my hand against you to kill you.” (Al-Maidah, 5: 28)

Humans have always waged wars to seize each other's wealth and property, and establish their control over one another.

Many people who have campaigned with this ambition have used especially corrupted religions as an alibi.

And most of the time, it is easy to see that this was just an excuse.

For instance, despite appearances, the motive behind the wars that Shia rebels had waged against the Abbasid government, to supposedly restore the rights of Ali's (RA) family, were solely political.

The Abbasids had used the same excuse before that to destroy the Umayyads.

But religion has always stood in the way of such unjustified assaults. It has commanded war only in situations where there is no other way to end tyranny and unrest and even then, it has given warfare very strict laws of engagement.

Our Prophet's (SAW) instructions are clear:

“Do not kill children, worshippers who have retired to temples, women, the elderly and those hired for work outside of war.

Do not burn temples or raze trees!" (Ahmed, I, 300; Tabarani, Kabir, XI, 224/11562; Bukhari, Jihâd, 148; Muslim, Jihad, 24, 25; Tabarani, Awsat, I, 48/135; Ibn Majah, Jihad, 30; Waqidi, III, 912; Abdurrazzaq, Musannaf, V, 220)

An unbiased look at history makes it impossible to deny how Muslims have abided by the law of warfare, as well as the freedom of religion they introduced to the lands they conquered and the overall satisfaction of the people they ruled.

Let us reflect a little on the history of war:

The Crusades were certainly organised by popes; yet, those who joined the campaigns were motivated not so much by religion but by a desire for pillage and adventure.

And expectedly, Muslims defended their lives and their lands against these unjustified assaults.

Mahir Iz uses a logical line of reasoning to critique Tevfik Fikret's all-out and rather implausible stance against warfare:

"There are two types of people. One is good, the other is bad. Representing the good is Abel, while the bad is represented by Cane. These two types have fought each other since times immemorial.

All religions want people to have the nature of Abel.

If we leave emotions aside, thousands of events throughout history prove that humans cannot live on earth without shedding blood.

This means there are innocent people who merit pity and protection. Seeing as the aggressor does what he does to as part of his nature and that all religions and laws protect the victim and punish the oppressor, this means that vilifying commanders or warfare in general is caused by an emotional weakness." (Mahir Iz, Üstadım Mehmed Akif, prepared by Ertuğrul Düzdağ, p. 51)

To expand on this a little further;

How fair is it to put all wars in the same basket?

Is an aggressor who attacks to seize and plunder the same as one who fights to defend his life, family, religion and country?

In this world of trial, the battle between good and evil will never end, hence, there will always be war. So, calling on "War to be abolished!" or expecting religions "To ban war!" is a ploy that only suits the agenda of invaders.

Or do deists condemn those who resist against armies that invaded their countries?

Or is deism simply an effort to pacify and enslave Muslims to open up their lands to a Western invasion like never before?

These plays have been tried numerous times. The latest example is those attempting to make a so-called interfaith dialogue, and virtually threw flowers at the crusading West, while pointing the rifle of criticism at fellow Muslims.

As Mehmed Akif has said:

*We thought she was a stunner until her mask was effaced
That harlot called civilisation, truly, barefaced*

Indeed, prior to the Balkan Wars, World War One and the War of Independence spanning a total of fifteen years, Ottoman intellectuals were infatuated by the West and looked upon the west as the saviours. But once the wars broke out, they saw how Western armies clawed through Muslim lands like hyenas, to lay claim on their wealth, including petroleum.

Mehmed Akif goes on to expose what he calls Europe's so-called civilisation, dominated by a materialist philosophy that gave birth to currents like atheism and deism:

*'Civilisation' has gnashed its teeth for you, for a long time
It first wants to chew you up and then swallow you down
Recognise the buffoon of a beast they call civilisation
and spit on the masked conscience of the age, spit on it*

Islam can never be held accountable for today's bloodied state of affairs.

On the contrary, the world has become what it is as a result of the selfish wars of manmade systems such as capitalism, socialism, fascism and Zionism.

It was not religious people who devised and pulled the pin on history's most horrendous and ruthless weapon, the atom bomb. Much rather, it was developed by scientists supposedly guided by reason and conscience, and used by a country apparently fighting on a mission for democracy and human rights.

That bomb wiped out innocent civilians including women, children, babies and the elderly, and along the way, devastated plants and wildlife.

So, those who claim that religions promote war, should put their hands on their hearts and answer: did the Second World War, which claimed millions of lives, carry the slightest religious motive?

Did Hitler or Mussolini have any religious motives?

Did Stalin, who raised a tower of dictatorship upon hundreds and thousands of skulls, have a religious belief?

Or was he a staunch enemy of religion?

Muslims have been the victims for nearly two centuries.

The only salvation for both the individual and society lies in establishing Islam in its entirety.

Islam derives from the word '*salam*', which means peace and it is based on peace, not on war.

Deists also claim that;

THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH!

They say:

"All people follow the dominant religion of their parents or societies. There is no absolute truth. Each religion has a sum of truths relative to itself."

This claim highly distorts the facts.

The hadith below can provide a starting point for a response:

"Each baby is born on the natural predisposition. This continues until he learns to talk. Afterwards, his parents turn him into a Christian, a Jew or a Zoroastrian." (Abu Dawud, Sunnah, 18; Tirmizi, Qadr, 5)

Our Prophet (SAW) informs us that people find it easier to enter the ready-made religions of their societies.

As every human being has a natural predisposition to believe, each may find it more convenient to embrace the religion observed by his family or society.

But, in actual fact, this amounts to wasting the potential found in the human predisposition.

If we, as Muslim, properly fulfil our duties to spread the word of Islam, not a single person on earth will remain unaware of the truth.

The Prophet's (SAW) companions were imbued with this awareness, as they took Islam to the far corners of the world, despite having limited means at their disposal.

In a short amount of time, Islam reached as far as India and China in the east, the Iberian Peninsula in the west, the Balkans, Caucasasia and the entire Central Asia in the north and deep into the heart of Africa and Indonesia in the south.

It goes without saying that the responsibility of people who have not received the call of Islam, is much lighter. They are only obliged to believe in Allah (JJ) without ascribing Him any partners.

Muslim intellectual Ibn Tufayl penned a book called *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*. The story is about a young child, who grows up on a remote island all alone, finding God purely by reasoning.

Daniel Defoe copied this plot when he wrote *Robinson Crusoe*, which similarly deals with a castaway on an island.

However;

Today, the influence of the biological parents and society on children has dwindled. They are replaced by mediums such as the television and the internet, which can be used to both negative and positive effects. A significant number of people have, in fact, found their true calling in Islam, following a thorough research on the internet.

A Haitian brother, all the way on the other side of the world, stumbled upon our books in English, while surfing the internet to look into the issue of women's rights. He is now a Muslim and has adopted the name Davud.⁵

These stories of guidance come with hundreds of examples; most famously of Muhammed Ali, Malcolm X, Yusuf Islam formerly known as Cat Stevens, and many more.

Today, Muslims have mosques and communities in every part of the world.

The society, culture or family are never barriers in the way of finding the truth.

It must be reminded that;

5. For the interview conducted with this brother by Yüzakı Magazine, see "Haiti'den Eyüp'e Bir Hidayet Hikayesi", no: 147; (2017, May) p. 26-30

Time and again, people travel great distances to earn a living. At times, this may be for a holiday, leisure or an education.

Now, must not man show the same energy to find the truth?

Is it necessary that he be spoon-fed by his family or society?

Regardless of the circumstances or living conditions, every person must reflect on and try to resolve the questions below:

- Why have human beings come into the world?
- On whose property do they live?
- And why does the universe offer so many hints to a power beyond?

And no matter where he is, man must search for the answers and find the truth.

On the other hand;

People born from pious parents in a Muslim society, must feel indebted and thankful for this blessing. They must thank the Glorious Allah for this enormous gift, appreciate and pray for the Muslims responsible for delivering it to them.

We see that;

Individuals living among Christians or Buddhists can easily end up embracing Islam. Yet, in contrast, people who are in the dark despite living just a few doors down from the local mosque, can well end up becoming atheists. This shows that when it comes to faith, personal will has a lot greater effect than the social environment.

And this means that;

Islam needs to be conveyed by model characters to all hearts near and far, so that the deprived can run to the truth.

By seizing onto Allah's (JJ) name 'the Guider' (*Al-Hadi*), we must strive to serve as a means to guide as many thirsty hearts as we can.

May Allah the Almighty enable us all to live on the path of guidance and become a means of getting others to join.

Amin!



THE MANNER OF THE CALL



Allah the Almighty commands us to be “soft-spoken” (*qawlan layyina*), when calling people to the guiding light of Islam.

The Qur’an also underlines the importance of explaining the religion in a beautiful tone:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ
وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition; and argue with them in the kindest way.” (Al-Nahl, 16: 125)

This, is an effort to win hearts.

THE MANNER OF THE CALL

In this book, we have tried explain what deism is, the material and spiritual reasons as to how it came about, and tried to answer the questions deists raise. However, we would like to caution our readers in regards to one important matter.

It is a principle of Islamic creed, that;

“Action is not part of faith.”

That is to say, while faulty action, sin and neglected or abandoned worship deal an enormous blow to a person’s spirituality, they do not wipe out his faith and take him out of Islam.

Yet, one must also be aware that taking this approach to the extreme and thinking, “...it is okay to lead an un-Islamic lifestyle of sin as it does not destroy my faith, so long as I keep my heart clean” converges with the views of the sect known in history as the Murjiah; and as such, is also deviant.

Such heedless people need guidance. One must search for a suitable vein to enter the bloodstream of their spirits.

Injecting a needle into the body without finding a suitable vein may cause physical damage. But inserting a needle into a suitable vein that runs into the heart, can lead to a cure. It is equally important to find the soft spot to convey the truth to the heart and soul. Only then may the person receive guidance and spiritual healing.

For example;

Jafar (RA) had found the opportunity in Abyssinia to convey Islam at the royal court of the Negus. When asked to recite some verses from the Qur’an, he looked for that suitable vein by which he could tap into the hearts of his Christian listener, so he found that in Chapter Maryam, in the verses that detail the birth of Jesus (AS). The Negus became emotional; and it is narrated that either right there and then or at a later time, he became a Muslim.

While there, Jafar (RA) could well have recited verses of punishment levelled at disbelievers. But would that have had the same effect?

This shows that a person calling others to Islam must have prudence. He must find a common ground with his listeners that could spur them to reflect on the Almighty's power, glory and divine art.

Hence;

As Muslims, it remains our duty to criticise and refute all forms of disbelief. But, at the same time, we cannot use an offensive tone that taunts people who subscribe to false beliefs. While there is nothing wrong in rebutting false ideas, it is entirely wrong to insult people's characters. Provoking a person's ego blocks the sun of truth from rising above his heart.

In other words;

We must never rouse people into saying;

"If this is what Islam is about, I would rather remain a deist!"

We must prudently strive to educate others, take spiritual precautions, keep praying and always remain optimistic.

Also;

Caution is needed when approaching young people who have either become susceptible to deist propaganda or, due to a youthful naivety, outright exclaim "I am a deist!", when invited to reclaim the deeds of worship they have abandoned or belief in Islam's fundamentals they no longer espouse.

They must have the true nature of deism explained to them and how it is nothing more than atheism in disguise.

It is widely known that;

While the years of youth pack a lot of energy, they are, at the same time, a stage of 'foolhardy madness'. Young people who mix with the wrong crowd may, therefore, react impulsively, as a way rebelling against their own family values. But their words do not really come from the heart. Often, the views are simply reactionary and highly emotional. Thus, their beliefs are often not a permanent conviction, but rather a temporary opinion that stems from the turbulence of youth. In cases like these, an educator would be gravely ignorant, if he were to turn their views into permanent beliefs by reacting in a hysterical and over-the-top manner.

He may organise get-togethers that encourage young people to contemplate and strengthen their spiritual sensitivity.

Education requires patience and persistence. It is impossible to make a river cross a mountain that stands in its way, by getting it to flow over it. One has to make the river detour around it. The road may seem long and arduous, but it eventually takes one to the desired destination.

For a good Muslim raised in a pious environment, it is always painful to listen to someone speak words of denial.

But it must not be forgotten, that;

Our greatest exemplar, Prophet Muhammed (SAW) spent his entire life explaining Islamic faith to people. During festivals, pilgrimage, at the courtyard of the Kaaba and the troublesome road to Taif, he tirelessly explained Islam to ingrained disbelievers and people perplexed by the turmoil of an ignorant age. He recited to them the Qur'an. He conveyed its verses. He made them think. To those who could not come round to believing in the afterlife, he gave them the example of the revival of springtime nature after winter. He communicated Islam at all times, through both words and his exemplary conduct.

The more devotedly and passionately we live Islam, the greater our force will be to kindle the flames of love in our children, students and the people we come across in life.

Faith is an action of the heart, and to make other hearts hear the call, rational and logical arguments alone do not suffice.

They ask tricky questions that confuse minds.

We must prefer spiritual questions that stimulate the conscience and rouse emotions into life.

QUESTIONS WAITING TO BE ANSWERED

- When observing this universe of living beings, do you not feel different from the rest?
- Does not the lie that this wonder called the human being came into existence through billions of coincidences, cause you to feel any doubt?
- Does your heart accept the claim that human beings are different only in their biological and mental development?
- Do you think about life at all? Does it ever cross your mind that there may be a reason why people live and die? Or is it all haphazard and coincidental?

- Around a thousand years ago, the world's population was perhaps around five-six million. In 1915, it hit 1.5 billion, and now it is over 7 billion, and other than humans, there are many species, whose numbers are impossible to even gauge. All of them need to be fed, and are fed at every moment without delay. Who provides the quadrillions of food items with a pinpoint accuracy? Doesn't this deserve a bit of thought with an impartial mind?

- Each season, Allah the Almighty provides different provision to each climate on earth. He leaves no one to starve, whether they are dwelling in the poles, on the equator or in deserts. In summer, the Almighty yields fruits like watermelon to help with dehydration, and in winter, fruits like orange packed with vitamin C. Should not one reflect on the wisdom underlying these blessings and give thanks?

- Think about snowfall. It covers the earth from half a metre to a metre and even more, turning the soil into a blanket for a variety of flora and fauna, once the snow melts, we do not see carcasses scattered about. Who is the One who protects all these creatures inside this specially made bundle?

- Like a bridal gown or white flowers, that snowfall soothes the spirit. But how depressing would it have been if it snowed pitch black or blood red?

- There is a law programmed into creation, the order of the cosmos and every sequence of events, which always looks out for the wellbeing of humans, and which scientists call "the anthropic principle". Whose work is it?

For example;

- Have you ever thought about the delicate balance in the air, consisting of 77% nitrogen and 21% oxygen?

- Is there a single person who walks around with an oxygen tank worried that 'there may be sudden a drop in oxygen levels'?

- Is not this confidence, which even nonbelievers have, an implicit trust in divine power?

- Did you know anything about this universe before you were born? And now you are headed towards the grave, without knowing anything about it. How will you be there? How will your situation be, if you go there without preparation?

- If two plays were to be staged in the same theatre, their plots would become blurred. Now, look at the theatre that is this cosmos. It stages billions of plays simultaneously, with each following its own story line. How does this happen; did you ever think?

- If you run a business, you call your staff to account in the event of the smallest mishap. How do you suppose that the Glorious Power, who created you out of nothing, will not call you to account for the life and blessings He gave?

“O man! What has deluded you in respect to your Noble Lord? He who created you and formed you and proportioned you and assembled you in whatever way He willed.” (Al-Infitar, 82: 6-8)

- You study to get an education. But do you know anything about what real education is? Deep down, are you really satisfied with an education that does not teach you the meaning and purpose of life?

Are you aware that real education lies in obeying the command?

إِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

“Read in the name of your Lord, who created!” (Al-Alaq, 96: 1); and reading into the majesty of Allah the Almighty, acknowledging Him inside the heart and living in a constant state of thanks? Have you ever done such a reading?

- Is there a culture greater, firmer and more comprehensive than the culture of Islam? Is there another system like Islam that regulates all areas of life in a peaceful way?

- What is death? Is it an end, a perishing? What can deism say about what lies beyond? Only Allah (JJ) who infinitely knows the unseen and prophets, who He has given knowledge to, have explained about death and the beyond.

- Should injustices remain unpunished and felons get away scot-free or should there be a day of justice where all scores will be settled? What do you say?

- Is not the claim that reason has absolute power to guide man, a little too theoretical? Is there a single example to support the claim? Could his reason help Aristotle against the pressures of the Alexander? Could the

so-called smart people who invented the atom bomb, protect it from landing in evil hands that ultimately dropped it on innocent people?

- Have you ever read about the lives of philosophers? Do you know the extent of evil, contradiction, immorality and crimes in their lives; and that some of them, who idolised reason and tried to supposedly give some order to the world, have ended up committing suicide? How can a reason that cannot help itself, guide humanity?

- When will you realise that reason is a double-edged sword that can serve both good and evil?

- Think about the foundations of morality. Would there have been such a thing as morality without the true religion?

- Can all of mankind possibly agree on the principles of a morality based on reason? And what benefit to man lies in a chaotic order on which nobody can agree?

- Why have the capitalists promising peace and welfare condoned every kind of evil with the motto “Laissez faire, laissez passer / Let him be, let him pass” and filled the pockets of blood-drinking cartels?

- Where is the prosperity, peace and welfare the capitalists had promised? Luxury and wealth to a handful and tough luck to the rest! Is that it?

Woe to hearts that have become stone cold!

- Communists set out promising equality for all. They ended up establishing a regime built on millions of corpses. Why did they end up channelling all the wealth to the members of the communist party?

- Is there a single person left who still carries just a glimmer of hope for capitalism or communism?

- Apart from Islam, is there another system that instigates a serious flow of money from the rich to the poor via financial acts like alms, charity, endowments and compensation for violated or abandoned deeds of worship; and, while doing all this, instils the wealthy with a consciousness, where they give, not out of a sense of duty, but love?

- And then there is abortion, which many a pitiless reason and rational system deem harmless; even a right and exercise of freedom! An ethics of reason that justifies murder!

- Would you consent to the murder of a baby with a beating heart, just because the mother does not want it? Would your conscience condone such a murder? What if you were the baby?

- There you have reason which, in the name of freedom, not only gives way to sexual deviancies that uproot the family, it furthermore promotes it.

- And over in the United Nations, you have five countries with a 'veto power' that back and sponsor the atrocities of other kindred countries to protect their own personal interests. These leaders are all of a materialist, humanist, capitalist or socialist mind-set.

- Deist, capitalist or secularist...From where you are standing, does the future of the world look bright?

- Is not environmental pollution, extinct species, nuclear weapons, atrocities and colonialism, all the workings of a world based on science and reason?

- So, where is the cure to keep reason away from madness and barbarism?

- Put aside your infatuation with Western technology and power for just a second, and tell me, in all honesty, from the vantage of family and human values: does the West have anything real to offer?

- Who was happier; the person of yesteryear or the person of today? This, despite all the current comfort and luxury;and in spite of an array of countries now turned into lands of mourning, humans left deprived, desolate and imprisoned in the claws of blind and deaf consciences!

- As a human being, is your heart at peace with the brutalities taking place in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Yemen and Myanmar? Does this not sting your conscience?

- A traffic accident, a turbulent flight, an earthquake. The chances are you have experienced some of these. How was the fear that ran through your heart at that moment?You felt the need to seek refuge in and pray to an all-powerful being, did you not?

- You are aware that the turbulence of death and the beyond are far scarier and more enduring, are you not?

- Think of the people who advise you to be careless about matters of religion and faith. Will any of them be able to help during those terrible moments?

- Our Prophet (SAW) made his passage to the afterlife in the year 632. But his words paint such an accurate picture of our current time. Does it make any sense not to believe in what he has told us about the afterlife?

- A ripe apple and a rotten apple cannot be considered equal. It would be a simple logical error. Then, by what kind of logic are we supposed to consider corrupt religions and the one true religion of Islam, which has remained free of distortion, on the same level?

- Are you sure you know enough about Islam?

- Is it correct to form convictions on a matter without having sufficient knowledge?

- You say you know; yet, from which sources? Can slanderous information give you authentic knowledge?

• So, you, who says he is a deist;

- Have you ever thought about eternity?

- Eternal paradise or eternal fire?

- Is a handful of days on earth worth setting fire to an eternal life?

- Do you know that all the things the Almighty wants us to do in the world, are purely to our favour?

- Prior to choosing a university, a student thinks long and hard whether he is "making the right decision." Are you sure that you have put enough thought behind your decisions that impact your eternal life? Or are you simply following the masses?

- In a universe that displays a magnificent ecological balance from the particle to the whole and in which no species is left to wander without purpose, can you even presume that the human being could be left on his own?

- Think of the opposite. What if all these beings, blessings and means the Almighty Allah has assigned to our service for us to benefit and reflect, were left to drift as they wished and do entirely as they pleased? The result would have been a total mayhem that would have ripped the earth's ecological balance into shreds and given neither you nor other beings a chance

to live. All species would have instantly destroyed each other, reducing the cosmos to a sad pile of ruin. But open your eyes and look at the glorious harmony by which the universe functions.

- What have you got to lose by sparing a few seconds to think about what the below verse is saying:

“Did you suppose that We created you for amusement and that you would not be returned to Us?” (Al-Muminun, 23: 115)

- Who can even claim that Allah (JJ) does not intervene in the universe He created? What proof do they have?

- If you say that the universe flows naturally according to the laws of physics, then who instated those laws? Has science been able to discover every single physical law to give us enough conviction to claim that everything in the cosmos occurs in line with those principles?

- Much to the contrary, quantum physics tells us about events in the cosmos that cannot be reduced to a law or be explained with the dynamics of causality. In light of this, how can the claim that the Almighty does not intervene in the universe hold any weight?

- When looking at the flow of social events, pondering on the history of societies or your own life story, do you not see a divine intervention that is irreconcilable with the laws of physics?

- The day when you are brought forth to the presence of your Lord, will you be able to come up with an excuse as to why you rejected His existence, denied His prophets and refused to read or be guided by His books?

- While the Almighty asks you do certain tasks during your short stay on earth, if you think about the eternal paradise He promises, is He really asking for too much?

Mull over these questions and look for their answers!

These are the questions you need to settle. Once you silence your ego and turn to the Almighty's instructions with a clear heart and conscience, you will see how much peace and joy our true religion will instil in your heart. All doubts will disperse and you will see the light.

Peace is with those who follow the path of guidance!



(FINAL WORD)

THE SUN CANNOT
BE PLASTERED WITH
MUD



Atheists and deists are like wanderers who lose sight of the sun in broad daylight.

A person in the clutches of ignorance is like a ship sailing in the middle of the ocean without a rudder. The question is not if he will sink but where.

(FINAL WORD)

THE SUN CANNOT BE PLASTERED WITH MUD

Even a simple fact;

...is properly known and understood, only after it is observed from all sides.

Now, claiming to understand an object after merely observing just three of its one-hundred sides, and going on to develop interpretations, pass judgments and make decisions based on this shoddy observation, not only cuts one off from the truth of the matter, it also smacks of self-deception and to look for peace in this deceit, hoping it will bring a brighter future of comfort, is a truly strange case of derangement.

This is the dishonesty and deadlock of both atheism and deism.

An attempt to generate blackspots by casting the shadow of darkness over a truth that is as clear as the sun, shutting the eyes to its countless rays and focusing on just a few spots that suits their absurd obsession to constrict an infinite whole into their narrow minds and passing passions....

But it is impossible!

Can you plaster the sun with mud?

No mud can cover the truths, wisdom and verses of the divine, as they shine even brighter than the sun.

It is meaningful, that;

The master of all architects, Mimar Sinan has evocatively etched this wisdom in the Selimiye Mosque in a way we can all understand.

On the road that stretches to the mosque from afar, no matter how wide you open your eyes, the mosque appears to have only two minarets.

Why?

It is because you are still looking at it from the same perspective.

Yet, once the sight meets the whole, you realise the mosque has, not two, but four minarets.

Yes;

Even sight is not enough for man to correctly grasp a given reality, unless he joins all perspectives together under one vision.

In other words;

The best method to understand any matter and establish a healthy grasp is not to lessen the angles of observing it, but on the contrary, increasing them, so as to acquire a comprehensive vision from all angles.

For example;

Freud and philosophers alike grab just one aspect from the whole of life and speak as though that part represents the whole, which amounts to ignoring many realities and consequently, gives rise to deviant and immoral ideas. Thus, every issue they deal with by becoming fixated on just one aspect, gives rise, not to a comprehensive understanding, but a lopsided outlook.

Yet, in Islamic thought, this is never the case. This is because Islam envelops life's every phase and fact. And it is thanks to this that Islam is a means of peace and salvation both in this life and the next.

The fact is, that;

Replacing the truth with fantasy by pulling a smokescreen over the angles of vision and, like an ostrich, burying the head in the sand, leads man nowhere. The mind will suffocate in that sandy ditch, and end up being thrown into the scrapyard of misery.

Therefore;

On any given matter, we must form our opinions without blocking or dimming any angle of vision. Forming opinions based on just one angle out of perhaps thousands more, is to impoverish the mind, and lead it, along with the eternal life that awaits, in complete bankruptcy, and the culprit is none other than the person leading the charge.

A trader will inevitably head into liquidation, if he neglects a host of sums while doing the checks and balances on his finances. It is a similar case.

Thus;

In the world of commerce, even the most hardened atheists and deists do not go just on their own opinions. To make a profit, they inspect transactions from all angles, taking pains not to neglect a single sum or leave anything in the dark, and doctors also do the same.

For example;

When a patient walks in with a complaint, before anything else, a doctor looks to accurately diagnose the cause of the illness. Otherwise, his prescriptions will be misleading and the patient will not find a cure. Medical practitioners, therefore, always look to detect and explain to the patient the source of the illness. They then advise a treatment, stressing, with supporting evidence, that this is the only way the patient may be healed. The treatment works towards the cause of healing the patient. So, from the beginning to the end, doctors look for a cause. They do the same even for a small pimple.

And then they get up and claim the human being and the universes, great and small, are without cause. How ridiculous!

As for the cause of this particular whim, which lacks the slightest trace of logic, calculation and mathematics -when mankind has these to acknowledge for the progress it continues to make- it is man's capricious hope to;

“Escape personal responsibilities in life.”

And they do not, for once, think;

What becomes of the world when man shirks at divine responsibilities? And what becomes of man?

The history of humankind is plain to see. Man has witnessed each set of events perhaps a million times and continues to do so today. The reality remains unchanged:

Whenever man drops the load of divine responsibilities off his back and flees in the opposite way, he finds himself in the middle of misery and debacle. Murder, injustice and genocide, are all results of this ignorance. This idiocy drains every stream of peace and conscience out of the world. It wreaks destruction on earth from one corner to another. It turns life into hell, and the eternal journey winds up in an unspeakable torment.

But;

Whenever man properly understands and embraces his divine responsibilities, even the fiercest troubles and pains in this life turn to bliss, and the eternal journey ultimately ends in paradise.

Therefore;

The entire issue hinges on seeing the truth from all its angles and arriving at a proper understanding.

Simpler put;

We must focus on questions like, "Why were we created? Where did we come from and where are we headed? What must we provide for our spirits in the ebb and flow of life? What will save us?"; and thereby dust ourselves up with a proper acquaintance with the eternal reality.

We must not get bogged down in flawed and illogical questions that cast patches of blind-spots on the mind by turning a blind eye on the Almighty's innumerable blessings.

It must be known that;

Atheists and deists always get carried away in partial and illogical questions based on an unmathematical interpretation. They suppose the art to be without an artist. They assume that even the most magnificent design in the universe are without a designer. They imagine the effect without a cause.

Sheikh Sadi says:

"For the intelligent, each leaf is a book of divine knowledge. But for the ignorant, all the trees do not amount to a single leaf."

Thus they chase their own tails around the blind-spots of reason. They do this so their questions go without answers and they, in the end, are proven right. But no matter how much they claim to know, they prefer the ignorance and disaster of pretending not to understand even the strongest of answers, so that they have a license to carry on as irresponsibly in life as they wish.

They become strangely obsessed with metaphysical issues that are way beyond their grasp. This is due to a desire to lead a careless life that allows them to dive deep into inhumane pleasures, and to lay their hands on an

excuse to avoid personal responsibilities, when it is these that directly affect them and determine their ultimate destiny.

They say, for example:

“If Allah knows we will end up in either heaven or hell, then why does He test us?”

They do not care to think that;

Schools that they highly regard put students through years and years of exams all in the name of education and for the sake of a piece of paper called a diploma. Schools do this because they know from beforehand that the lazy students will fail, while the clever ones will pass. And when graduates are interviewed for jobs, the first thing they are asked about is their diplomas, given to them only on the basis of their proficiency during the course of a ton of exams. If they are found wanting, they are shown the door.

Now;

Whether it be for this or that, man follows this blueprint in every stage of his life, where he is constantly tested. For him to accept this as part of life, while remonstrate against the Lord's grand exam, whose diploma will decide on where he ends up in the afterlife, is childish and self-defeating.

Man, himself, promotes or demotes aspiring applicants in line with an education system that is based on exams. So, with what kind of flawed logic can he accuse the Almighty of the doing the same?

Our ancestors have said it wonderfully:

The sun cannot be plastered with mud.

Atheists and deists are like wanderers who lose sight of the sun in broad daylight. A person in the clutches of ignorance is like a ship sailing in the middle of the ocean without a rudder. The question is not if he will be sink but where.

May the Almighty Allah guard us from the empty stares of a blinded vision and illuminate our eyes with the light of faith and the Qur'an!

Amin!





A logically wonderful response to those who do not think:

“Does man not see that We created him from a drop yet there he is, an open antagonist!

He makes likenesses of Us and forgets his own creation, saying, ‘who will give life to bone when they are decayed?’ Say, ‘He who made them in the first place will bring them back to life. He has total knowledge of each created thing.’” (Ya-Sin, 36: 77-79)

A divine caution to deniers:

“Was man not a sperm in a semen emitted?

He was then a clinging clot, and Allah formed and proportioned him.

And made of him two mates, a male and a female.

So, does not that Creator have the power to revive the dead?” (Al-Qiyamah, 75: 37-40)



To give a glimpse into His power Allah states:

“Does man think We will not be able to reassemble his bones?

We surely will. We will even redesign his fingertips (بِئَانَةٍ)!”
(Al-Qiyamah, 75: 3-4)

The fingerprint is a wonder.

Allah the Almighty informed us about this magnificent art 1400 years ago.

A science the West has only recently discovered and named dactyloscopy.

Just one of the countless miracles of the Qur'an!



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